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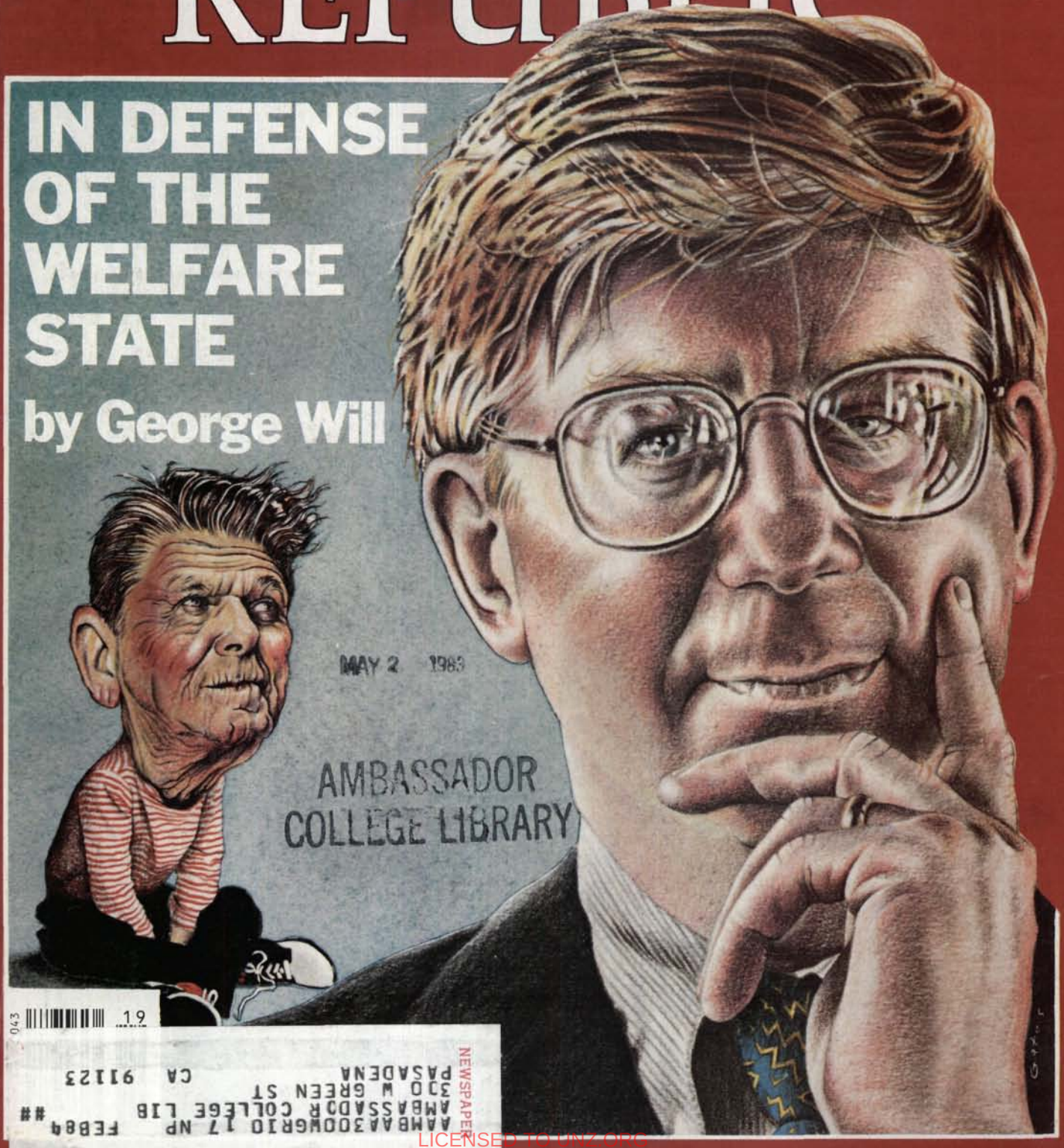
by George Will



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Robert Coles on INTELLECTUALS

For many years, as I have worked, trying to understand how all sorts of families make do, often against considerable odds, I have written articles and books for interested fellow citizens. Soon enough, I have received the expected responses. But on one score I confess to perplexity, even alarm — an absence, almost total, of reaction when it comes to an entire side of my work. I refer to the descriptions I've rendered of the religious thoughts and feelings of the children and adults I've come to know.

All I need do, it seems, is come up with a social conclusion, make a psychological generalization, attempt a literary analysis, try portraying a certain kind of personal or regional life, and there are thoughtful (appreciatively or reprovingly so) correspondents willing to share their evaluations publicly. But when I have tried to describe how, say, an old Spanish-speaking woman from northern New Mexico, or a Southern black child, or an Appalachian white child, or a small-town working-class man happen to feel about Jesus and His words and deeds, then the result is either the silence already mentioned, or rarely, a puzzled, frustrated truculence: "I don't see why you get yourself into all that religious talk! If you're trying to prove that people are superstitious, or need a crutch, then a page is enough, not a chapter or half a book!"

In my own case, the attention given religious faith is held even more suspect because I'm a psychiatrist — and so, presumably, "educated" and "perceptive" enough (so I was told in another friendly letter!) to "know better"! I should be what an intellectual ought to be — someone who analyzes how others think and feel, who gives reasons for one or another moment of history. The civil rights struggle, for instance: I ought have kept my mind on the various "variables" that prompted it.

Meanwhile, there is this young man from Birmingham, Alabama, speaking in 1965: "I don't know why I said no to segregation. I'm just another white Southerner, and I wasn't brought up to love integration! But I was brought up to love Jesus Christ, and when I saw the police of this city use dogs on people, I asked myself what Jesus would have done — and that's all I know about how I came to be here, on the firing line!"

Intellectuals also need to document how people's beliefs prompt them to live their lives. And I fear that when I started doing that I learned something about myself and my kind — how arrogant and self-centered we risk becoming: interested in our own heady assertions, and anxious to be the spokespersons for all those others, who don't write and teach and come up with new ideas, but who rather, try to go from one day to the next, and who yes, in large numbers indeed, keep calling on Jesus, not the intellectuals, for guidance. —from the June 1982 **NEW OXFORD REVIEW**.

If you are interested in exploring the beliefs behind the "data" — in probing the deeper religious feelings embedded in our lives, however much we try to ignore them — if you want to *understand* what moves a Martin Luther King Jr., a Lech Walesa, an Archbishop Romero, a Mother Teresa, a Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Polish Pope, a Simone Weil, a Dorothy Day, a George Orwell, then you're ready to look into the **NEW OXFORD REVIEW**. We are spearheading the renewed interest among today's intellectuals in what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." Robert Coles writes a regular column called "Harvard Diary," and like him, our writers — Peter L. Berger, J.M. Cameron, Erazim Kohák, Juli Loesch, Dale Vree, and others — express themselves with clarity, verve, style, and "heart." Published monthly, we have been praised by *Newsweek* for being "thoughtful," and the *Library Journal* predicts we will "doubtless command increasing attention."

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FREE TRADE FORUM

To the editors:
Bob Kuttner's article, "The Free Trade Fallacy," is an unconvincing defense of protectionism (TNR, March 28).

Mr. Kuttner states, ". . . the argument that blames the problem on overpaid labor collapses when one understands that semiskilled labor overseas in several Asian nations is producing advanced products for the U.S. market at less than a dollar an hour. Who really thinks we should lower American wages to that level in order to compete?" No one seriously suggests that wages be cut to those levels. But can Mr. Kuttner seriously be suggesting that a nearly 100 percent difference in wage rates between Japanese and American autoworkers is not significant?

Mr. Kuttner suggests that what is needed is more economic planning. While I can agree with this concept in general, in the context of an agreement favoring protectionism, it is totally confused. Is he seriously suggesting that it is responsible economic planning to prop up the bloated and grossly inefficient American auto industry through domestic content legislation?

Lastly, Mr. Kuttner states, "In theory, other nations willingness to *exploit* their work forces in order to provide Americans with good, cheap products offers a deal we shouldn't refuse." (Emphasis added). This process of "exploitation" is nothing more than the industrial development of the rest of the world, and to be sure represents a transfer of real wealth to those countries. If the disparity in the wealth of nations is ever to be narrowed, it will only be through this "exploitation" process that Mr. Kuttner is so opposed to. If foreign workers were forced to raise their wages, they would have no competitive advantage, thereby assuring wealthy industrialized nations of hegemony. In the final analysis, protectionism results in exploitation of the poorer nations of the world.

The causes of America's industrial decay are complex and require thoughtfulness and courage. The process is not helped by frivolous and disingenuous essays such as Mr. Kuttner's.

MAX F. HEINTZ JR
Minneapolis, Minnesota

To the editors:
Quite simply, Bob Kuttner's "The Free Trade Fallacy" is the best overview on the subject that I've seen anywhere.

DONALD M. BLINKEN
E. M. Warburg, Pincus & Co.
New York, New York

To the editors:
Bob Kuttner's article, "The Free Trade Fallacy," deserves praise, but I would like to highlight a few risks his argument papers over.

Mr. Kuttner justly chastises faith in a reified market. Once we open the neomercantilist Pandora's box, however, where are lines drawn, how are decisions made, and conflicts resolved?

First, we should not forget that United States dependence on exports has doubled in the last decade, and the price of protection is always retaliation. Mr. Kuttner's world can look quite ugly. Japan's state-led strategy is now causing unprecedented trade conflict. What will happen when the United States and Europe throw their governments' resources even more fully into the fray? Don't count on smoothly negotiated market-sharing agreements.

The losers from trade wars are not the strong, or even the newly industrializing countries, but the weak. A prime example is provided by the Multifiber Agreement Mr. Kuttner cites as a model of "rational" protection. American textile workers have benefited, but the agreement is now little more than a shell for discrimination against the L.D.C.s. That may be the choice we want to make, but let's not have illusions.

What insulated, rationalizing bureaucracy will guarantee that we get the "successful" textile outcome and not the steel disaster? The "unthinkable" may lie in legitimizing protection in a political system like ours. Far from producing the nicely rationalized industries our caricature of Japan portrays, we could end up with boondoggles.

Ah yes, but there are jobs in those losers, and this is the ultimate issue. Besides the argument that jobs will be lost in our export industries, does labor fare

continued on page 38

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4 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... A free trade free-for-all.

6 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... RUNNING BLACK

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... THE SCOWCROFT REVOLUTION
The report of the Scowcroft Commission closes the "window of vulnerability," and points the way to strategic wisdom. Read carefully, Mr. President.

RIGHTS AND REGIMES
Must "silent diplomacy" be deaf as well as dumb?

NOTEBOOK

14 **CURTIS B. GANS** ..... BURTON'S GLORY
The stilling of a strong (and loud) voice for justice.

15 **CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER** ..... CROSSCURRENTS: NICARAGUAN NETTLE
Should we be trying to overthrow the Sandinistas?

16 **JON CARROLL** ..... TOTAL RECALL
Hey, San Francisco, is this election really necessary?

18 **JASON DEPARLE** ..... BANK PRANKS
They'd rather withhold the truth than the taxes.

20 **GEORGE WILL** ..... IN DEFENSE OF THE WELFARE STATE
If conservatism is to engage itself with the way we live now, it must develop an affirmative view of the role of government. That role must embody an ethic of common provision: in short, the welfare state.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: THE DOUBLE DEALERS
Written after the fashion of Restoration comedy, *The Draughtsman's Contract* is elegantly vicious.

27 **JOSEF ŠKVORECKÝ** ..... TALKIN' MOSCOW BLUES
Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917-1980
by S. Frederick Starr

32 **RICHARD RORTY** ..... THE PRAGMATIST
A Stroll with William James
by Jacques Barzun

34 **WILLIAM E. LEUCHTENBURG** ... IKE REVISED
The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader
by Fred I. Greenstein

36 **DAPHNE MERKIN** ..... THE AURA OF SUICIDE
The Stories of Breece D'J Pancake

38 **NANCY MARDER** ..... BRIEF REVIEW
Aké, The Years of Childhood
by Wole Soyinka

42 **WASHINGTON DIARIST** ..... MEMORIES

COVER Drawing by Donald Gates for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 20.

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FROM WASHINGTON

RUNNING BLACK

The Reverend Jesse Jackson is trying out a new line around the country. "We are going from the outhouse to the courthouse to the Statehouse to the White House," says Jackson, and he says it with the unmistakable air of a man talking about himself.

Jesse Jackson is loaded dice, and the prospect of his running for President inspires a case of nerves in Democratic politicians, black and white. The idea of a black Presidential candidacy was put out for public comment in early March. It has received plenty, mostly negative. A black candidate in the Democratic primaries, it is said, would fragment black leadership, drain votes away from the more liberal white candidates to the benefit of middle-of-the-roaders or conservatives, and would end up being merely a symbolic gesture. Black leaders like Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young argue that it is still necessary for blacks to pick the most electable white liberal (in this case probably Mondale) and get close to him early.

That is the wrong strategy. In 1976 Young persuaded black leaders and white liberals to back a long shot named Jimmy Carter against George Wallace, just for a couple of Southern primaries. When Carter polished off Wallace, they were stuck with him. Within two years black leaders were condemning President Carter for "callous neglect of blacks, the poor, and America's cities." Blacks were with the winner early, and they got taken.

In 1980 blacks divided between Carter and Kennedy, finding themselves with no political center of gravity and no leverage either place. Cozying up to the right white liberal is the play-it-safe, low-risk, small-gain strategy.

Blacks can do better with a candidate of their own. It is obvious that no white candidate can or will address the black agenda in the manner of a Julian Bond or a Jesse Jackson. All the Democratic contenders inveigh against Reagan's economic policies, but which takes him to task for rolling back civil rights? Which offers an agenda for the poor?

A black candidacy would maximize black clout in both the short and the long run. Blacks make up about 20 percent of the national electorate. Over half of the black vote is in the South, and a major portion of the remainder is concentrated in six northern states (Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Michigan), an arrangement that maximizes black voting strength in the primaries. Delegates to national conventions are elected by Congressional district, and there are now eighty-six districts with 20 percent or higher black population. That translates to 30 percent or more of the Democratic vote. Against Mondale, Hart, Glenn, Hollings, and Askew, Jesse Jackson might do very well in those districts.

A black candidacy also would help blacks realize their political potential. Consider these numbers: there are 18 million eligible black voters, but only 10 million are registered, and only 7 million voted in the last election. The most important ingredient in black turnout these days is a strong black candidate. Robert Clark proved that in his Mississippi Congressional race last year, even while losing. And Harold Washington proved it again in Chicago. In the black community there was a bonanza of registrations, and voting was obligatory.

Julian Bond estimates that a viable black Presidential candidate could increase black registration to 14 million and general election turnout to 12 million. If Bond is even close, Democrats should be begging Jesse Jackson to run. With Ronald Reagan up for re-election, the Republican Party would start out 12 million votes in the hole.

There's more. A black candidacy might help the Democratic Party face up to its white problem. Blacks don't have any trouble voting for white candidates, but not vice versa. Last fall New York Democrat Mario Cuomo got 93 percent of the black vote. In Michigan Democrat James Blanchard got 97 percent, and in Wisconsin Democrat Tony Earl got 98 percent. All three men now call themselves governor. But in California polls show that black Democrat Tom Bradley lost 3 percent of the vote solely because he was black, which computes out to more than three times the margin of his loss to Republican George Deukmejian. Deukmejian's advertising carried the slogan, "Because we need a governor for all of us." Robert Clark was roundly favored to become the first black Congressman from Mississippi since Reconstruction, until Republican pollsters figured out that many of the district's voters did not know he was black. The Republican candidate, Webb Franklin, used the slogan, "A Congressman for us." White Democrats found it alluring, as they did Bernard Epton's famous "Before it's too late," designed to warn the pale brethren against Harold Washington. Now Frank Rizzo's commercials zero in on Wilson Goode's race: "If you love Philadelphia, vote for Frank Rizzo."

It is a "soft" racist appeal. When there are only two candidates and one is black, there's no chance of getting "out-niggered," as George Wallace once complained he had. So it is possible to be subtle. Pollsters now search for the white racial factor by asking, "Would it bother you to vote for a black candidate? Do you think it would bother your neighbors?"

If whites aren't going to vote for blacks, blacks must learn to do it themselves. That is the lesson of Chicago. Harold Washington said his hardest task in the primary was persuading black voters that a vote for him was not a vote tossed away. If Jane Byrne or Richie Daley had won the primary, blacks would have delivered their usual 90 percent to the Democratic nominee. As it was, Harold Washington had to scratch and claw for 20 percent of the white vote. That's what Jesse Jackson means when he says that the contract between the Democratic Party and black America must be renegotiated. But why must Jesse Jackson be the undesignated hitter? Doesn't Jackson give away too much ammunition to the enemy? We will be seeing pictures of him with his arms around Yasir Arafat. Well, they said Harold Washington was the wrong candidate for Chicago, too, but Washington did the essential task very well, which was to energize and mobilize the black electorate. Who could do that better running for President than Jesse Jackson? Besides, when the Great Presidential Debates begin, having Jesse up there on the stage will sure keep those other dudes honest.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 9, 1983

THE SCOWCROFT REVOLUTION

"How is the world ruled and how do wars start?" asked Karl Kraus, the angry Viennese writer. "Diplomats tell lies to journalists, and then believe what they read." Kraus lived long before the manufacture of nuclear missiles, but his observation perfectly describes some of the history of American national security policy in the nuclear age. Its recent history in particular—the hysteria, at the highest levels of government, about the health of our strategic forces, "the window of vulnerability" that is alleged to have put us at the mercy of the Soviets, and the MX that is alleged to return them to our mercy—has been the result, in large measure, of the kind of deception that Kraus denounced. Not that the strategic situation on land is completely secure; the Soviets certainly have a capacity to threaten our 1,047 ICBMs with a more or less successful first strike, and it is a capacity that we cannot exactly match. Still, the strategic perplexity of the United States is not precisely what our military planners have said it is. And nothing makes this clearer than the Report of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces, or the Scowcroft Report. With its publication, the deception is over.

The Scowcroft Report is one of the most serious and sophisticated official documents of the nuclear era. It is also one of the most candid official documents of any era. This candor should be as satisfying to certain critics of the Administration's strategic thinking as it should be embarrassing to the Administration. Some of the Administration's most fundamental strategic axioms—which the President has put to good political use, in the form of such slogans as "the window of vulnerability"—do not survive the Scowcroft Commission's scrutiny. In the course of its critical considerations, moreover, the commission has accomplished nothing less than a revolution in doctrine. Its recommendations (100 MXs in Minuteman silos, with a mind to the eventual replacement of missiles of many warheads with missiles of only one warhead) must not obscure this revolution. If the commission's conclusions are accepted, American strategy will be saved from a good deal of dangerous dogma, and the American public freed from a good deal of fear.

Consider, for example, this sentence, which appears unannounced midway through the report: ". . . the different components of our strategic forces should be assessed collectively and not in isolation." In the current debate about American nuclear policy, such a sentence comes with a crash of common sense. Some of us have been waiting for years to hear it, and for Presidents to hear it, too. After all, what is "the window of vulnerability," if not the assessment of American land-based forces in isolation? The appeal of the alarmist argument about American security rests precisely upon the detachment of our vulnerable forces, which are on land, from our invulnerable forces, which are at sea. This detachment has made it possible for the President and the Pentagon to promote a concern about our ICBMs into a concern about the state of our defenses in general. This Administration has devoted itself to distracting the attention of the American people from the truth of the triad—the truth that there exists in the strategic forces of this country a redundancy that resounds in the minds of the Soviets. They cannot contemplate the weakness of our ICBMs without also contemplating the strength of our SLBMs. Our submarines make the Soviets sentient that they sneak through the window on pain of nuclear holocaust, and that is the most grievous pain in history. The vulnerability of America's land-based forces, in other words, is not the vulnerability of America. Or, to put it differently, we, without a first-strike force, are deterring them, and they, with a first-strike force, are deterred. As the commission declared—as liberals have become hoarse declaring—"to deter such surprise attacks

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we can reasonably rely both on our other strategic forces and on the range of operational uncertainties that the Soviets would have to consider in planning such aggression."

Our land-based forces must be modernized, yes; but the Scowcroft Report has confirmed that what we have on our hands is a military problem and not a promise of doom. Having disposed of "the window of vulnerability" from the point of view of our prospects for living, furthermore, the report proceeds to dispose of it even from the point of view of the imperiled ICBMs themselves. The Scowcroft thesis consists in the transformation of the strategic function of these land-based missiles. To fully grasp this thesis, however, a little history is required.

IN THE LATE 1950s American strategists were seized with alarm about a Soviet "surprise attack," as they were in the late 1970s. It was then that the distinction between a first strike and a second strike was introduced into American strategy. Albert Wohlstetter argued that "the balance of terror" was "delicate," that the idea of deterrence, the controlling idea of American strategy since the advent of the nuclear age, implied more than the ability to annihilate the other side. "To deter an attack," he wrote, "means being able to strike back in spite of it." The idea of deterrence, in other words, presented certain requirements for the design of American forces. The first of these requirements was diversity. This was realized in the triad, which the development of air- and sea-launched cruise missiles will soon make a pentad. The second requirement was survivability. A weapons system had to make good on the threat of retaliation, which is the essence of deterrence. It not merely had to work, it had to work after it had been attacked.

The requirement of survivability had a troubled history, owing to dramatic developments in the technology of delivery systems. The requirement was met quite elegantly by ICBMs until the accuracy race was run. But the range and guidance systems of intercontinental ballistic missiles have created what is known as counterforce, which makes it possible for them to hit very small targets very far away—as long as the targets stay in one place, that is. Counterforce, in other words, put the burden of the survivability of ICBMs not upon the weapon but upon its "basing mode." Once our Minuteman became vulnerable to their SS-18, it became a priority of American planning to change the Minuteman from a fixed target into a moving target. The Carter Administration considered moving the ICBMs along a "racetrack," in a kind of shell game that the SS-18s could never win. The Reagan Administration toyed with the idea of hitching the ICBMs to airplanes, which would have saved our land-based force by making it an air-based force, and finally settled upon the basing scheme known as "dense pack," which would place our entire land-based force in a single field and rely upon the SS-18s to knock each other out. This vision of a communal life for ICBMs, as is well known, failed to persuade Congress. It refused to allow the President to proceed with the MX until he could show Congress a way to deploy it invulnerably. The President created the Scowcroft Commission to find such a way.

The commission has concluded that the way does not exist. The problem, as its report brutally admits, is "virtually insoluble"; it recommends, therefore, that the Minuteman's successor be installed in the Minuteman's silo. The problem, moreover, has been improperly put. There is no point in attempting "to replicate . . . two decades of Minuteman history." The golden age of the ICBM is over. The commission's conclusion, however, is not to abandon the ICBM, but to abandon the requirement of survivability. It is no longer an adequate justification for the weapon. This is the Scowcroft revolution in doctrine. The fetish of recent Administrations, and of some of its fancy defense intellectuals, is shown to be false, and consigned to the dustbin of strategic history. There is a bit of political smartness in this; the members of the commission understood that the ICBM (more specifically, the MX) could not be saved unless the requirement of survivability was sacrificed. But it is not only politically smart. It is also strategically honest. The peril in which the ICBM forever finds itself does not make it useless, but it does call for a new definition of its function.

THE REPORT proposes a new definition. "Whereas it is highly desirable that a component of the strategic forces be survivable when it is viewed separately," the commission observes, "it makes a major contribution to deterrence even if its survivability depends in substantial measure on the existence of one of the other components of the force." With this observation a whole debate becomes obsolete. What, then, is the "major contribution" of ICBMs to deterrence? What is the strategic function of the vulnerable land-based leg of our triad? According to the report, it is threefold: "(1) serving as a hedge against possible vulnerabilities in our submarine force; (2) introducing complexity and uncertainty into any plan of Soviet attack, because of the different types of attacks that would have to be launched against our ICBMs and our bombers; and (3) helping to deter Soviet threats of massive conventional or limited nuclear attacks by the ability to respond promptly and controllably against hardened military targets." The ICBM, in short, no longer has pride of place in the American arsenal; but a place it has. This place is conceived in terms of its relationship to the rest of the arsenal, which is in turn conceived as a system of strengths and weaknesses that together add up to a national defense. As the requirement of survivability is retired, then, the requirement of diversity is revived. It should never have been in need of revival. Still, it was, and this is the job that the Scowcroft Commission has done. Its systematic approach to our strategic forces, its principled insistence upon the whole picture, is the strength of this report. It is, too, the reason for the absence of swagger from its analysis. It does not flinch from the bad news—that the "reasonable survivability" of fixed targets "may not outlast the century," for example, or that "eventually the survival of

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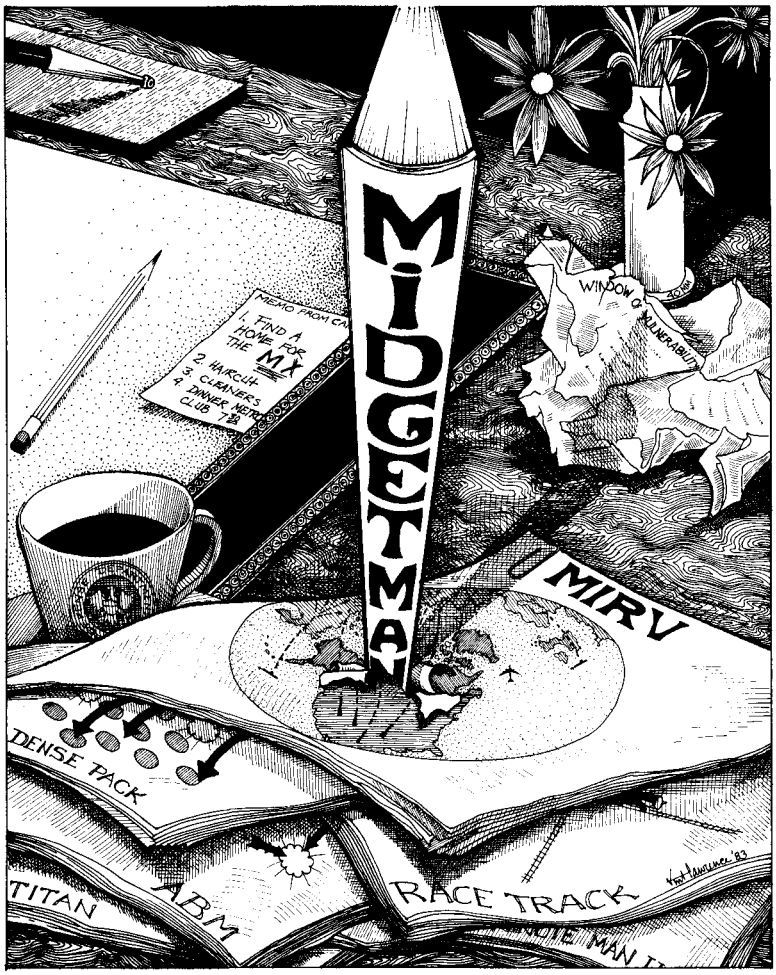
even the hardest [of superhardened] targets would be doubtful." Indeed, the Scowcroft Commission has produced a full confession of the uncertainties that confront the planner, which is good for the public, and better for the Pentagon. Unlike many in their business, the authors of this report have not pretended to know more than can be known. They have not tried to put the best face on the military situation, because the face it has is good enough.

The Scowcroft Report recommends that the land-based forces of the United States be modernized in two ways—by the production of one hundred MX missiles to be sheathed in Minuteman silos, and by the slow but steady redesign of our land-based forces away from missiles with many warheads toward missiles with a single warhead.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The Midgetman idea (the name is disliked by the Pentagon, which has a thing about size) is based on an admirable ambition for strategic stability. And it is based upon the recognition that the cause of the instability that currently characterizes the situation on land is the MIRV, the multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle. The outfitting of a single missile with many warheads, which is aided and abetted by an arms control regime that keeps warheads out of the counting, makes it possible for the side that strikes first to destroy the land-based force of its enemy without exhausting its own land-based force; the first striker could assume that a military advantage would be the consequence of such an abomination. No such assumption about a first strike could be made, however, if only a single warhead adorned each of the ICBMs of the superpowers. According to the consuetudinary law of strategic nuclear exchanges, the attacker must assign two warheads to every target attacked; it would therefore be impossible for you to destroy even half the land-based force of your opponent without depleting the whole of your own land-based force. Midgetman means the introduction of a new strategic logic whose conclusion is a stalemate that, in view of the danger that these diabolical things pose, can only be called sublime. The discovery of this logic must be credited to a young Congressman from Tennessee, who published in these pages a proposal for single-warhead missiles whose time had come (see "The Fork in the Road," by Albert Gore Jr., TNR, May 5, 1982). Recently Henry Kissinger picked up the idea and ran with it; he who cites a saying without citing its source, according to the Talmud, brings destruction upon the world. Now the Scowcroft Commission concludes that nothing serves the strategic interests of the United States so much as the Midgetman, which will comprise "an ICBM force structure in which potential targets are of comparatively low value." We congratulate Representative Gore; rarely has a member of Congress made so creative a contribution to the structure and strategy of the American military.

A few animadversions upon the Midgetman, but first a brief look back in anger at the MIRV. It is impossible not to draw the conclusion from the experience of MIRVs that there are times when the greatest source of strategic instability is technology. American strategists entered the 1970s disenchanted with mutual assured destruction and enchanted with research and development. New military options were to be created by new military devices. Foremost among these devices was the MIRV. It was developed to "degrade" ABM systems, to frustrate missile defense by multiplying the warheads to be defended against, but it was immediately understood by some strategists that what would be degraded by the MIRV would be the ICBM itself. "The window of vulnerability," in other words, came as no surprise, but many of the planners and the politicians who would panic about it ten years later refused to restrain the scientists and the engineers from bringing it into being. There is a cautionary tale here about the extent to which we are the masters of what we can do and the extent to which we are the slaves. President Reagan's recent flirtation with ballistic missile defense requires the tale to be told again. We had the wit to write an

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ABM treaty, and we should cleave closely to it. We lacked the wit to write a MIRV treaty, and how we regret it. The MIRV is a curse upon deterrence. It is nothing other than a MIRV treaty, in fact, that the Scowcroft Commission recommends as the centerpiece for arms control. Better late than never, this time; but hindsight in nuclear matters may not always be possible.

The Midgetman is indeed a formula for the "common security" to which many critics of the nuclear kingdom aspire. Unfortunately the commonality of this security depends upon the willingness of the Soviet Union to follow the new force structure. Mr. Kissinger, be it noted, disagrees; "If the Soviets refuse such a scheme," he writes, "we should proceed unilaterally toward our goal." This is difficult to understand. The Soviets have 6,500 land-based warheads. They must confront, therefore, 3,250 land-based American targets if a first strike is to be robbed of its interest for them. We now boast, if that is the word, 1,047 ICBMs, and if we lower 100 MXs into 100 Minuteman silos, as the Scowcroft Commission recommends, we will still have 1,047 ICBMs. This means that we must build 2,003 Midgetmen for the stalemate on land to ensue. Now, that number is a political nightmare. Where, under our spacious skies and in our amber fields of grain, will we deploy these missiles? If they be fixed, in whose backyards? If they be mobile, on whose streets? The Soviets, in short, must take Midgetman, too, if the Scowcroft scheme is to work. There are those who believe that they will, because Soviet ICBMs are equally endangered by the accuracy of American missiles. The chief of the Soviet General Staff admitted this to Leslie Gelb of *The New York Times* in March. The Iron Curtain, then, also hangs on a window. Unfortunately, there are indications that the Soviets intend to close their window by "going mobile," that is, by creating the kind of race track that we rejected. In a Soviet-style society such infrastructural miracles are possible. Totalitarianism rather simplifies some of the tasks of national security.

WHICH BRINGS US, for the last time if we are lucky, to the MX. The Scowcroft Report calls for one hundred of the controversial missiles. Its political mandate was precisely to find a successful sell for them. About the MX the report protests a little too much. Some of its arguments for it are rather forced. We do not need the MX as a decoy, in the event that the Russians break the ABM treaty. Nor do we need the MX as a booster for satellites in space; that is Scowcroft's only bit of silliness, and it is a bit like demanding a bayonet to sew a button. Nor do we need the MX because an American failure to manufacture it would signal the Soviets that we lack "national will and cohesion"; that is Scowcroft's only bit of shamefulness. The discussion of the course of American strategy must not be inhibited by such un-American considerations.

Still, in some respects the report protests quite rightly. For a start, it has transformed the terms of the MX debate by taking the moral edge off the matter. The moral objection against the MX was that a first-strike force makes the world a more dangerous place; and the objection was good, except that 100 MXs do not constitute a first-strike force. (Taken together with the 900 warheads on the 300 Mark-12A Minuteman III, the 1,000 warheads on the 100 MXs would be a first-strike force, but there is no evidence that the Soviets are spooked by the Mark 12A). In the wake of the Scowcroft Report, the debate about the MX must move from considerations of apocalypse to considerations of the most effective way to manage deterrence.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that deterrence will be most honored by the de-MIRVing of the superpowers. And there is no doubt that the Soviets will not de-MIRV for the sake of sweetness. The only incentive the Soviets will have to redirect their ICBM deployments is our ICBM deployments. This is a fact of life in Geneva that no sincere advocate of arms control can ignore. The report argues persuasively that "it is illusory to believe that we could obtain a satisfactory agreement with the Soviets limiting ICBM deployments if we unilaterally terminated the only new U.S. ICBM program that could lead to deployment in this decade." If you want Midgetman, in other words, you may have to put up with some MX. Since the scale of the MX deployment envisaged by the commission is not sufficient to tempt the Soviets to the use of nuclear force, or to tempt the United States to preempt the Soviet use of nuclear force, we believe that it is reasonable to concur with the commission's recommendation.

We do not concur gladly. The failure to find a safe mode of basing missiles on land means that the specter of launch-on-warning will continue to haunt the nuclear strategy of both the United States and the Soviet Union. The conviction that you build weapons in order to take them apart—the arms control argument for armament, with which military planners often tease liberals—has been shown in the past to be too clever by half. The latest method for closing the window of vulnerability is not quite a reason to rejoice if the window of vulnerability does not really exist. Still, the responsible modernization of our forces, for which the Scowcroft Commission found a formula, is not in contradiction to deterrence. One day the submarine will no longer be the perfect weapon; all good things must pass. And no treaty will dissuade the Russians from their research into antisubmarine warfare. The results of their research are a long way off, but the nuclear world must be stable for our children, too. If the MX will not provoke a first strike, and will not perform a first strike, and will not make the military planning of the Russians any easier, and will not stand in the way of the Midgetman, then the MX is no longer exactly evil. It is not exactly good, either; but goodness is the last thing that can be asked of a nuclear weapon. What can be asked of a nuclear weapon is a service to deterrence. If the abridged MX deployment proposed by the Scowcroft Commission moves the Russians toward the de-MIRVing of their strategic forces, we will not have increased the danger. We will have lessened it. And then all our hands will be a little less dirty.

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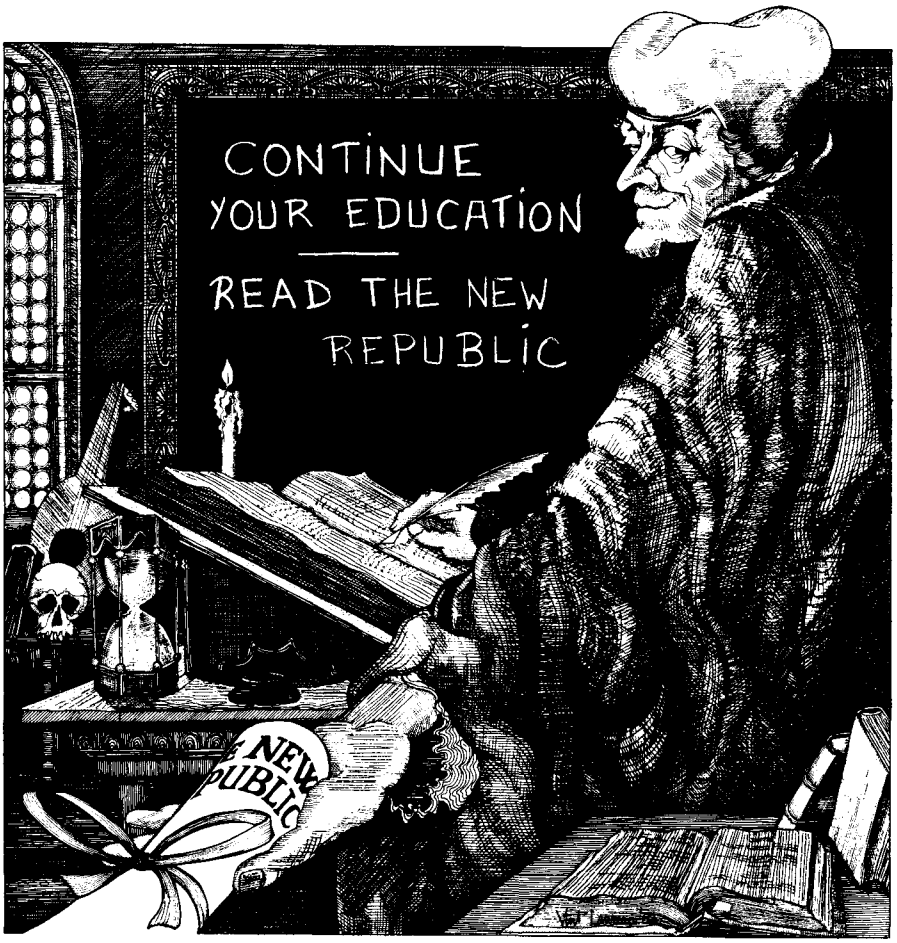

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RIGHTS AND REGIMES

A human rights policy is not a foreign policy. This was the Reagan correction of the Carter course in Latin America, and there was some sense in it. But the present Administration fails to understand the extent to which human rights policy does, in fact, determine the position of the United States in the region. "Silent diplomacy," it called its strategy for pressuring the Latin American persecutors of their own people. The Administration argues, for example, that the amelioration of the Argentinian situation may be credited to its greater politeness in policy, though the defeat in the Falklands may also have had something to do with the Argentinian government's reluctance to provoke its population. In any event, there is a consequence of the Administration's human rights policy that may grievously prejudice the position of America in its own hemisphere in years to come. "Silent diplomacy," by another name, is a tropism toward regimes.

In a disturbing dispatch from Santiago, Edward Schumacher of *The New York Times* reports that the representatives of the United States in Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina have virtually lost contact with Church leaders, human rights activists, and the political opposition. This "is intended to avoid offending the host government." Etiquette is a professional requirement for diplomats, but the United States will be poorly served if its representatives lose sight of the whole society to which they have been sent, and rely upon rulers for their reading of reality. This, too, was a lesson of Iran; when the Shah fell his American ally didn't know what hit it, because it had been receiving its intelligence only from the Shah. Our representatives in Tehran were ignorant even of the identity of the opposition. All that we gained from our short-run thinking was a short run.

Let our human rights policy be silent where silence will work, and noisy where noise will work. But let us not, in either case, sever our links with the populations of the countries whose support we say is critical. Where the perception on the part of the population grows that the United States does not include their version of the truth in the making of its policy, the prospects for American policy will never be good. The collective memory of a continent cannot be easily overcome. Realism, yes, but not in a manner that costs us the future. Even in those countries whose "authoritarians" we count as allies, it must be a priority of American policy to squirrel away a sense in the population that we found the political system of these places squalid, too. Regimes come and go; peoples remain. The Administration must consider more carefully the requirements of American interests in unstable societies. Our present unpopularity in places that are pertinent to our security, was not historically inevitable; if we cooperate with legitimate change, it will not hurt us. If we do not, the Soviets have the field, and the ambition for justice will fall to the ambition to power.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE DESECRATION OF THE WARSAW GHETTO under the auspices of the Jaruzelski junta continues. In our April 18 issue, Abraham Brumberg and former U.S. Ambassador Richard T. Davies described the outrage of the Polish government's "commemoration" of the Jewish uprising in 1943. Now there is more. Lech Walesa was stopped on his way to the Ghetto, where he wished to place a wreath. And still more. A wreath was placed at the Ghetto by the P.L.O. "We consider these the hero Jews . . . our comrades and brothers," said a P.L.O. spokesman. "We are not against Jews as Jews. We are against the Zionist movement." If the P.L.O. believes it is like "the hero Jews," it flatters itself. Nobody is a Nazi in the struggle between Israelis and Palestinians. Many of "the hero Jews" in the Warsaw Ghetto, moreover, were Zionists. Some of the few survivors made it to Israel, where they founded the Ghetto Fighters' Kibbutz on the northern coast, which the P.L.O. has shelled. Maybe that is what the P.L.O. means by its two-track strategy of diplomacy and armed struggle—praise the ones that died and kill the ones that didn't. As the P.L.O. representative laid his wreath, he said that "the Palestinian people are the victims of the new Nazism." Damn the Polish government for permitting this. It was the falsest act in recent memory.

□ MAYBE WE DON'T have the right to overthrow the government of Nicaragua, but let us understand what sort of government it is. Or, to put the problem differently, the prescriptive errors of the right do not excuse the descriptive errors of the left. We note, for example, the Sandinista decision to legislate against birth control and abortion. Surely this should trouble some of the left's sleep. Are the likes of Margaret Heckler to be overlooked if they appear in battle fatigues and in a junta? We note, too, the astounding reaction of the Nicaraguan Defense Minister to the Soviet suggestion that deployment of American missiles in Europe might be countered by the deployment of Soviet missiles in Nicaragua. "The Soviet Union has not proposed this up to now," Humberto Ortega Saavedra said. "If they ask us we will examine the proposal and make our own decision. The warlike policy of the Reagan Administration justifies any kind of defense Nicaragua chooses." A nuclear response to covert operations? This is the talk of a madman. Is nuclear adventurism to be overlooked if it is contemplated by an enemy of the United States? Recall the reaction, and right it was, when Ronald Reagan spoke cavalierly about nuclear weapons. *This* should trouble all of America's sleep. Of course Mr. Saavedra may merely be posturing. The military situation in 1983, however, is not like the military situation in 1962, when Soviet missiles were introduced into Cuba. The Soviets backed down because they were in the inferior position. In the intervening decades they saw to it that this position would change. The introduction of Soviet mis-

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The Protectionist Illusion

The stagnating economy makes protectionism an ever more seductive temptress.

With millions of Americans out of work, pressures are mounting to restrict imports in hard-hit industries. The longer the economic slump, the stronger the sentiment to protect American products and the jobs of people who make them by erecting barriers to the flow of goods into the U.S. from abroad.

All nations, of course, want good economic times and high employment for their own people. To one degree or another, all countries are protectionist. The United States is less so than most. Since the end of World War II, we've been opening our borders and vast internal markets to other countries' wares. In turn, products made in America have found acceptance around the world, generating jobs here at home.

Protectionist fever was rampant in the 1930s. The results were calamitous: sky-high tariffs on imports, retaliatory measures by other countries, trade warfare, unemployment — depression.

Now the protectionist peril is welling up anew. Forces at work in the U.S. and other countries are undermining the international trading system that has evolved over the post-war decades and stimulated economic growth in most parts of the world.

Governments beset by economic troubles, especially unemployment, find themselves increasingly prodded to embrace such measures as import restrictions, trade quotas, and export subsidies. Politically, such measures may have appeal. Economically, they promise only disaster — a deepening of the world's economic ills, more people out of work, perhaps another outbreak of trade warfare like that of the Great Depression.

From the lessons of the past, it's clear that protectionist remedies are an illusion. They don't work. They are self-defeating, wiping out more jobs than they preserve. While some jobs may be saved in a protected industry, others are lost elsewhere in the economy.

Retreat from free trade lessens competition, deprives consumers of a full choice of products, drives up prices, and stokes inflation. Producers protected from competition lose their incentive to invest, improve, modernize, expand, compete — create more jobs.

Nations and people everywhere are better off with a trade system that's free and fair. As a principal economic power, the U.S. should lead the way to greater cooperation and openness in commerce as the best hope for economic health among all nations.

Let's not choke off imports. Let's expand exports.

UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

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siles into Nicaragua, then, would be no trifling matter. Our missiles in Europe will redress a balance. Their missiles in Nicaragua will upset one. Doomsday, in other words, may dawn south of the border.

□ A NEW NAME—but an old friend—is on THE NEW REPUBLIC's list of contributing editors as of this week. He is Richard L. Strout, of *The Christian Science Monitor*, who (as is no longer a secret) wrote our TRB column every week for forty years, from March 1943 to March 1983. We're delighted to have him back with us, this time out in the open.

□ STORMY APPLAUSE, please, for another contributing editor: Michael Kinsley, whose *Harper's* has been given a National Magazine Award for "general excellence." For ink-stained wretches this is the equivalent of getting the Oscar for Best Picture. Mr. Kinsley became editor of *Harper's* in the fall of 1981; before that he was successively managing editor and editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC. The people who give out these awards—the American Society of Magazine Editors and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism—aren't always right (where's *our* prize, for example?), but they are surely right in honoring *Harper's* "for exploring subjects of serious intellectual content and lasting value, and writing about them with skepticism, verve, and humor." Not a bad description of Mike Kinsley's own writing, by the way.

□ AN EXHIBITION of David Hawk's photographs, "Cambodia Witness: Murder By Government 1975-1979," will be on display in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Office Building from April 26-30, and the rotunda of the Cannon House Office Building from May 2-13. Several of the photographs first appeared in THE NEW REPUBLIC with Mr. Hawk's article, "The Killing of Cambodia" (November 15, 1982). The exhibition was organized by Amnesty International U.S.A.

□ TWENTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "By picking up the tab for about 10 percent of Latin America's military bill—with, it seems, no firm control over the way the aid is spent, except on allocation to one of the three branches and the general limitation that chosen weapons should be bought in the U.S.—America becomes guilty by association, held partially responsible for perpetuating the armed forces as a privileged elite. (Over 30,000 retired officers in Argentina are on full pay!) A shadow falls even on the Alliance for Progress, which is not uncommonly described by the Latin American left as 'the new American imperialism.' For many the basic question is that posed by a Colombian politician when he asked: 'Against whom are we arming the Latin Americans? . . . We're creating armies which carry no weight in the international balance, but which are monstrous destroyers of the internal life of each nation. Each one of our countries is being occupied by its own army.' " ("On Military Aid," by Alex Neish, May 11, 1963.)

An honorable professional.

BURTON'S GLORY

IT TOOK FOUR chartered planes to carry the official, semi-official, and unofficial Washington mourners to San Francisco for the funeral of Representative Phillip Burton. But then, in life, Phil Burton had never done anything on a small scale. He worked, laughed, drank, smoked, swore, and politicked to excess. He was an intensely loyal friend. He was also an implacable and unforgiving enemy—the quality that probably cost him the House Democratic majority leadership, which he missed by one vote in 1976.

More's the pity. For Burton was one of those rare people who knew how to forge the nexus between liberal policy and political power. He could close the unlikely deal, build the unusual coalition, promote the appropriate spokesman, badger and bully the leadership, and whip the votes into line for ends he believed to be in the national interest. It's a safe bet that had he been majority leader there would have been complaints about the abrasiveness of his style. But no one would be saying, as so many are saying now, that the Democrats lack an effective political and policy antidote to Republican rule.

Burton was usually ahead of his time. He saw the folly of American involvement in Vietnam from the day he entered the House of Representatives in 1965. He was calling for governmental intervention to protect the environment long before it became an item on the liberal checklist. He understood that even in a time of scarce fiscal and physical resources, government had an obligation to correct the social and economic inequities in society. His list of accomplishments was prodigious—cost-of-living adjustments for Social Security recipients, supplemental benefits for the elderly and handicapped, black lung benefits for miners, a national parks bill which brought large areas of land and water under federal protection, abolition of the House Un-American Activities Committee. He also helped change the rules of the House to give more power to subcommittee chairmen, and transformed the Democratic Study Group from a small bank of purveyors of innovative and progressive ideas into a much larger institution devoted to organizing support for the enactment of liberal programs. (Neither reform, if truth be told, was a totally unmixed blessing.)

Some of Burton's detractors have said he lost sight of principle in pursuit of power. I don't think so. For Burton often stood where others feared to tread. One example in particular comes to mind. He alone, among liberal leaders, saw in the Family Assistance Plan, proffered by Daniel Patrick Moynihan and briefly embraced by Richard Nixon, a window of opportunity to transform a bureaucratic and paternalistic welfare system into something which might provide real income redistribution for the poor. He was rewarded for his vision, which history has shown to be

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correct, by attacks from his natural allies—liberals, labor, and minorities.

Burton died too young (he was 56) and too suddenly to hear any calm tributes to his wisdom or to the largeness of his public contributions. But he was not given to false modesty, and he surely knew that he was one of the giants of his generation in the House. Along with such men as Richard Bolling, James O'Hara, Andrew Young, and Frank Thompson (who are no longer in Congress), and Gillis Long and Morris Udall (who are still there), Phil Burton worked, not always in the same way and not always in concert, to make the House of Representatives function in a way that made politics what Robert Kennedy said it could be, "an honorable profession."

CURTIS B. GANS

Curtis B. Gans is a columnist and directs the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate.

CROSSCURRENTS

NICARAGUAN NETTLE

WHY *not* overthrow the Sandinistas? The Boland Amendment, passed last year by Congress, prohibits the United States from directly or indirectly helping forces trying to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. The Reagan Administration claims that its support for guerrillas fighting the Sandinistas conforms to the requirements of the Boland Amendment. The claim rests on the plausible assumption that two thousand or so lightly armed guerrillas are unlikely, in the near future at least, to overthrow a regime with the biggest army in Central America, backed by Cuban advisers and equipped with sophisticated Soviet- and Libyan-supplied arms.

While the Boland Amendment has not prevented the Administration from carrying on its not-so-secret war, the whole does-he-or-doesn't-he question it raises has succeeded in distorting the debate over Nicaragua. Instead of asking, Should we help the guerrillas and to what end? the question has become, What does Ronald Reagan in his heart intend by helping the guerrillas? (Some in the U.S. press, including CBS News, have used the Sandinista pejorative "counterrevolutionary"—can you name a single good counterrevolutionary in human history?—in referring to the antigovernment guerrillas; unlike the official press in Nicaragua, we are not obliged to use government-sanctioned nouns.) This has led to a rather sterile debate between those who suspect the President of harboring hopes of overthrowing the Sandinistas, and those who say that his aims are more limited—to harass them, to divert their resources to an intractable guerrilla war, to make it harder for Nicaragua to supply arms to the guerrillas in El Salvador, and to pressure Nicaragua to negotiate a general settlement in Central America favorable to the U.S. and its allies. But since Mr. Reagan says that it is not his intention to overthrow the Sandinistas, and since it is unlikely that anyone will produce empirical evidence to contradict him (unless, of course, he is indiscreet enough to tell King Hussein, which is as good as placing an ad in *The Wall Street Journal*), all that critics can do is call the President a liar. The charge is serious—because while every government sends diplomats abroad to lie for their country, the President would be lying at home, to Congress and his people—but since the charge is almost inherently unprovable, it prevents rather than promotes debate on the critical question of what the United States ought to be doing in Central America.

It helps to start by asking what the Sandinistas are doing. They have reneged on promises to bring democracy to Nicaragua, methodically centralized power, suppressed the opposition, and militarized society. In short, they have betrayed their own revolution. That is the view not so much of Mr. Reagan, who was never much enamored of the revolution to begin with, but of many of Mr. Reagan's Congressional critics, like Senator Patrick Leahy, who oppose efforts to overthrow the Sandinistas. More important, it is the view of Sandinista heroes like Edén Pastora (Commander Zero) and former junta leader and defense minister Alfonso Robelo, who fought Somoza and have now declared a new "war of liberation" against what they convincingly argue is a successor despotism. In foreign policy, the Sandinistas have worked to destabilize Honduras and Costa Rica and to help guerrillas in El Salvador overthrow the government, which for all its weakness and brutality has a claim to legitimacy that the Sandinistas will never have: it was elected. The Sandinista regime threatens the United States not only by undermining American friends in the region, but more directly: defense minister Ortega has indicated that Nicaragua might accept Soviet nuclear missiles aimed at the United States. Tyranny at home, subversion abroad, and Soviet-backed threats against the United States: it might seem justification enough for American support to expatriate Nicaraguans who want to get rid of the Sandinista junta, and have no democratic means of doing so.

Critics make two principal counterarguments. First, that the guerrillas are not worthy of our support; they are Somocistas. The charge is not easily refuted, since reliable facts are scarce, but it is hard to believe that if the guerrillas were Somocistas they would be able to operate in, and draw recruits from, the countryside. Press reports indicate that they are able to do both. Press reports also indicate that the C.I.A., for reasons of logic if not of morality, took pains to weed out hard-line Somoza loyalists. The logic is simple: as the Sandinistas and the Vietnamese showed in victory, and as Che Guevara in

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Bolivia and the Communist insurgency in Thailand showed in defeat, guerrilla war without a popular base cannot succeed. The memory of Somoza's regime is universally despised in Nicaragua. If the guerrillas are in fact Somocistas bent on restoration (and willing to overlook the fact that Somoza is dead), their war is doomed from the beginning. Even the C.I.A. knows that. And if they are in fact not Somocistas, but instead represent many segments of Nicaraguan society, including Miskito Indians, the rural peasantry, and betrayed urban democrats, why not support them? Furthermore, the charge of Somocista control cannot be made at all against a second anti-Sandinista group, the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance, headed by Pastora and Robelo, which has just opened a second front (their undisguised aim, contra Boland, is to overthrow the Sandinistas) inside Nicaragua. Why deny *them* support?

Because, goes the alternative argument, we are bound by honor and by treaties like the O.A.S. charter not to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. There is a certain naiveté in this position. We are dealing here not with adversaries who play cricket; they promote revolution. For them that is not a breach of any code; on the contrary, it is a historic responsibility. If the United States could get Nicaragua to stop its efforts to destabilize El Salvador (no paradigm of democracy) and Costa Rica (a paradigm of democracy) by hauling Nicaragua into the World Court at The Hague, there would be no need to convince Nicaragua by means of an exile army. There is also a certain inconsistency in the critics' case. After all, we give arms, and are wholly justified in giving arms, to antigovernment guerrillas in Afghanistan; and we support two non-Communist guerrilla factions in Cambodia. It would be hard to imagine the grounds for opposing American support to, say, anti-Qaddafi Libyan elements or Iranian factions less barbaric than the current regime. The question in foreign policy is never an abstract choice between interference and noninterference; it's a moral and prudential calculation of what circumstances justify interference. If the Sandinistas just wanted to run a domestic tyranny, that, in my view, would not be sufficient justification for American efforts to overthrow them: there are simply too many tyrannies in the world for that to be the criterion for American action. But it chooses, in addition, to be an exporting tyranny, and a Soviet base. If that is not justification for the United States to interfere, then what is?

If the answer to that question is "nothing," then what we have is not a debate on the merits of intervention in Nicaragua, but a debate over the diplomatic equivalent of pacifism, namely isolationism (indeed a super-isolationism: the isolationists of the '20s and '30s sought only to keep us out of European entanglements). If Nicaragua, and not isolationism, is the issue, then it is time to clarify the debate. We might begin by repealing the Boland Amendment. Those who believe that the United States has no business in Nicaragua should instead insist on the adoption of the Harkin Amendment, which bans any aid to those fighting the government in Nicaragua. Those who believe that the fall of the Sandinistas is a consummation devoutly to be wished should stop quibbling about the terms of the Boland Amendment, and demand instead that the Administration make its secret war open and thus subject to honest debate.

Removing the secrecy surrounding the war would enable ordinary Americans and Congress to make an informed judgment as to whether this insurgency has any chance of success. If it does not, then we have the strongest possible argument against current policy: prudence dictates that the United States not embark on support for another doomed cause. The perversity of the present situation is that under the Boland Amendment, support for the guerrillas is permitted, but *only* if they cannot—or if we will not permit them to—succeed. That is no way to run a foreign policy.

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

DiFi's in her SanFran.

TOTAL RECALL

San Francisco

NOT TO BREAK the suspense, but it can be confidently predicted that the move to recall—i.e., oust—Mayor Dianne Feinstein will not succeed. Ten days before the April 26 election, telephone polls are showing that 75 percent of the voters will support DiFi, as she is known locally, 12 percent will support the recall, and the rest will be in a meeting that day.

Given this overwhelming preponderance of public sentiment, one might ask why this election is being held at all. The estimated $450,000 in public funds the election will cost is a steep price to pay to validate a foregone conclusion, particularly since DiFi has to run for Mayor again in just seven months. Add to that the $445,000 raised by the Mayor herself and the $20,000 raised by her opponents (remember those figures), and you've got a million-dollar sandbox for the various disgruntled splinter groups who together have enough power to initiate an election, although not enough to win one. Rather than unite to fight Feinstein in November, they've chosen to mount this quixotic campaign now, emptying their tiny war chests and sapping their limited energies in a battle they can't hope to win.

Remember the White Panther Party? Late-'60s radical group out of Ann Arbor, Michigan? House band was the MC-5 (translation: Motor City Quintet), which popularized the phrase "kick out the jams." Believed that smoking

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marijuana was a political act; believed that sexual intercourse with strangers was a political act; believed that dancing crazy with your hands above your head and your hair sticking out all funny was a political act. Leader John Sinclair was sentenced to ten years in jail for possession of two marijuana cigarettes, hence couplet from John Lennon song, "They gave him 10 for 2/What more can Colombo, Nixon, Rockefeller, Agnew do?" Colombo was judge in case. Sinclair released early. White Panthers ultimately disbanded.

Except in San Francisco. Like a squadron of Japanese soldiers still bivouacked in the jungles of Guam awaiting orders from Tojo, a tiny contingent of White Panthers remains in San Francisco, living in the Haight-Ashbury district (now known mostly for the relentless pace of its gentrification), involved in community organizing and rock 'n' roll.

The White Panthers (who have, as it happens, done some good and largely unknown work with various tenants' unions) finally found their issue: gun control. Feinstein had promoted and caused to be passed a local ordinance banning the possession of handguns in San Francisco. Newspapers ran a photo of her turning in her own cute little pistol. The White Panthers, who believe that private possession of firearms is all that stands between us and the imminent imposition of the police state, took umbrage and began collecting signatures in support of a special recall election.

Soon after, the California State Supreme Court invalidated the San Francisco ordinance, ruling that cities do not have the right to regulate firearms. But by that time the recall movement had attracted two other groups who could care less about gun control—were probably for it, in fact—but who wanted Feinstein out for their own reasons.

The first of these were political activists within the gay community. They were irritated at the Mayor because she had vetoed what is hereabouts called "the domestic partners bill." Said bill extended various city benefits available to spouses of city employees to live-in partners of employees whose relationship had not been consecrated by marriage. Although the bill also applied to heterosexuals involved in such arrangements, its clear thrust was to protect live-in homosexual partners.

AS IS BY NOW well known, the gay community in San Francisco is powerful even out of proportion to its considerable numbers. Gays tend to have larger amounts of disposable income and larger amounts of time to spend on political campaigns than their heterosexual counterparts with similar income and political convictions. Feinstein's relationship with this community has generally been good—she won election last time with its support—but the domestic partners veto changed all that. The president of the Harvey Milk Gay Democratic Club called the veto "an assault upon our human rights and our dignity as people."

No matter that the bill was badly written—the definition of what precisely constituted a domestic partner was, almost inevitably, very hazy—and thus (since any number of occasionally affectionate others could apply for medical compensation and/or death benefits) quite costly. The underlying issue was validation of lifestyle; technical complaints about the legislation were seen as homophobic nit-picking. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors, as cowardly a group of politicians as is possible to find, dumped the issue in the Mayor's lap, and she showed an unexpected amount of spine in rejecting it.

Thus, the most radical (the curious phrase used in the newspapers was "liberal to leftist") of the many gay political organizations announced their support of the recall. Many citizens made jokes in which the phrase "strange bedfellows" served as part of the punchline.

Then there was the Voice in the Wilderness contingent, a loose coalition of preservationist groups with names like San Francisco Tomorrow and the Victorian Alliance. They objected to Feinstein's unfettered affection for building large, ugly corporate structures in downtown San Francisco. This issue, predictably, has not captured the imagination of the majority of San Francisco residents, whose primary interest in large office buildings concerns the number of jobs available therein. Still, the preservationists persist, taking up any cudgel appropriate for DiFi-bashing.

The preservationists have long been supported by a few neighborhood groups, who believe, probably correctly, that money spent to encourage downtown development is money lost for residential improvement. On its face, that would seem to be a potentially popular issue, but in fact it has never captured the electorate—the failure of the recall movement is only the latest example of this particular reality.

Thus a moot election on a moot issue, with various confused or hopeless matters thrown in. Clearly the White Panthers, the militant gays, and the preservationists will be the losers when Feinstein comes through unscathed. And the winner, of course, will be the Mayor herself. Her resounding victory will set her up nicely for the November

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election, which she was already favored to win, and her unexpected bonanza in campaign funds will allow her to mount a media saturation campaign similar to the one that got her elected in the first place.

Although it is still not clear precisely what "jams" are, it now seems evident what happens when you kick them out: a mild-mannered centrist tightens her grip on a great metropolitan city. Maybe, next time, the thing to do would be to kick out the jellies.

JON CARROLL

Jon Carroll writes a daily column for the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Withholding the truth.

BANK PRANKS

CONGRESS WANTS TO TAKE A PIECE OF YOUR SAVINGS, said the newspaper advertisements. WHAT THEY NEED IS A PIECE OF YOUR MIND. Judging by the sacks of mail dumped on Capitol Hill recently, Congress has gotten just that. A write-in campaign, led by the banking industry, has flooded legislators with demands to repeal the interest and dividend withholding law passed last summer. Most of the public outcry stems from a bad understanding of a good law, and the bankers are behind the distortion. It now looks as though their deceitful campaign will pay off: this week the Senate leadership caved in, and agreed to a phony "compromise" that would "defer" withholding until at least 1987, and probably kill it forever. If the rest of Congress agrees and withholding is repealed, in the next five years the federal Treasury can kiss goodbye to about $18 billion in legitimately owed tax revenues.

With tax evasion claiming ever larger sums, the withholding law makes sense. Unless the repeal goes through, beginning on July 1 banks and other financial institutions will have to withhold 10 percent of interest and dividend income in much the same way that employers withhold payroll taxes. Interest and dividends already are subject to taxation, of course; it's the collection system, not the tax, that's new. The law increases the system's fairness by treating earned income (wages and salaries) and unearned income (interest and dividends) in a similar fashion. And, more importantly, it promises to boost receipts. Americans report 99 percent of the income they earn from wages and salaries, but only 89 percent of their interest earnings, and 85 percent of their dividend payments, according to Internal Revenue Service estimates. Unpaid taxes on interest and dividends amount to some $7.5 billion a year. If the estimates of the Treasury Department prove correct, withholding will net about $2.7 billion of that a year. That's money already owed the government—not, as many repeal supporters claim, a new tax.

Opponents of the law have argued—absurdly—that it will impose hardships on the poor and elderly. The poor, of course, don't have large interest and dividend incomes in the first place. And Congress has provided a number of exemptions from the withholding laws for people with small savings accounts or low tax liabilities. Accounts earning less than $150 a year are exempt, as are individuals owing less than $600 in income taxes and couples owing less than $1,000. The provisions are even more generous for senior citizens, excusing individuals with tax bills under $1,500 and couples with bills under $2,500. The Treasury Department says these exemptions will apply to almost 90 percent of the nation's elderly. Repeal supporters respond with the lame argument that the W-6 exemption form—which requires name, address, Social Security number, and account number—is too hard to fill out. Apparently the bankers have forgotten about the jumble of paperwork they themselves require to open the account in the first place.

THIS SIMPLE MOVE to improve tax collection has prompted one display of public histrionics after another. The financial editor of *The Kansas City Star* urged readers to fight the law, "the same way people who cherish the principles embraced by the Founding Fathers have been fighting tinhorn tyrants and political pettifoggers for the past two centuries." In an ad in *The Washington Post*—paid for by the U.S. Savings and Loan Association—former Senator Sam J. Ervin, the hero of Watergate, declared his opposition to withholding "as an American who abhors tyranny." Meanwhile, some fifteen *million* pieces of "anti-tyranny" mail have inundated the Congressional post offices. House Postmaster Robert V. Rota called the operation "the greatest sustained mail campaign I've ever seen on a single issue."

What's behind all this? In a word, bankers. The industry wants to avoid both the cost of administering withholding and any public resentment that might be visited upon bankers for acting as tax collectors. To discredit the withholding law, bank lobbyists have led a misleading public relations blitz. The American Bankers Association distributed more than fifteen thousand "Withholding Repeal Kits," which supply prefabricated Op-Ed pieces (just retype and sign), press releases, speeches, letters to the editor, letters to stockholders, and letters to Congress (with special inserts for the elderly and unemployed). The U.S. Savings and Loan Association chimed in with its own scare tactics, mailing announcements that charge the government with "big brotherism." And across the country consumers have been subjected to "Savers' Warnings" stuffed in with their monthly statements. Republican Senator Bob Kasten, the bankers' Congressional ally, stooped lowest of all, issuing a "Savers' Alert" which calls withholding "a new tax"—a shameless misrepresentation.

Opponents of withholding support their cries of "storm

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trooper" and "Big Brother" with bogus scenarios of consumer inconvenience and financial loss, and argue that withholding will discourage people from saving. The "loss" they refer to is the amount of additional interest that could be earned on the taxes withheld. How much is really involved? Well, if a bank withholds on a quarterly basis, savers with money in an account paying 9 percent interest would lose about fifty cents a year for every thousand dollars in the bank. But by allowing banks to wait until the end of the year to withhold on most accounts, the Treasury has virtually eliminated even this supposed "loss." And since more affluent taxpayers with substantial interest and dividend income must pay their taxes every three months, they don't collect a year's interest on interest anyway. Moreover, it must be remembered that for the past forty years the nation's tax collection system has presumed that taxpayers owe as they earn, a prescription that the new law fulfills.

BEHIND THE BANKERS' professed concern for their depositors' well-being lurks their real worry: how to safeguard their own pocketbooks. Bank lobbyists claim that the cost of installing and maintaining the necessary computer systems may run as high as $1.5 billion next year. The Treasury Department estimates the real cost at about $400 million. Although bankers say that they are being asked to bear extra costs when increased I.R.S. enforcement could produce the same revenue, that argument is no better now than it was when used against employer withholding. Tracking down evaders is a complicated and expensive process, profitable only for large sums, and there are more rewarding investigations for the I.R.S. to make. Furthermore, to ease the financial burden of instituting the system, Treasury regulations allow banks to retain the withheld taxes for thirty days before forwarding the money to the I.R.S. Banks may invest that money and use the resulting profit to pay for their start-up costs. And Treasury Secretary Donald Regan (no enemy of the financial community) has said he will consider extending the length of the "float" period if the banks' burden exceeds the department's estimate. To be sure, the withholding process will involve expense and inconvenience. But that's not the point. Withholding at the source of income is the most efficient form of tax collection, and in requiring the banks to withhold taxes, the federal government is asking no more than it asks of every employer in the country.

What began as a simple change in tax collection procedures has evolved into one of the oddest political battles in recent memory. Three years ago Bob Dole helped write the plank in the Republican platform that opposed interest and dividend withholding, and Ronald Reagan ran on it. Then suddenly the nation was treated to the spectacle of the two conservatives pitting themselves against the nation's banking establishment. The President himself has taken an active lobbying role, angrily denouncing the banking industry as a "selfish interest group." What's a friend of the rich like Reagan doing in a fight like this? A glance at the deficit provides one answer. The projected revenues from interest and dividend withholding over the next five years would more than pay for the MX system—and that's a lot of school lunches.

The battle on the Hill has been unusually vicious. In the Senate, Kasten and other repeal proponents held both the jobs bill and the Social Security compromise hostage to antiwithholding riders until Senate leaders promised them later consideration of the issue. At one point a frustrated Dole responded to the bankers' lobbying pressure by calling for a new look at the low income tax rate enjoyed by the banking industry. Wary of this kind of backlash, and realizing that they have bigger fish to fry—like a Congressional bailout of the International Monetary Fund—the big banks backed off. At a meeting with the President on April 13, Chase Manhattan, the Bank of America, Manufacturer's Hanover Trust, and other banking giants announced their opposition to the repeal movement. The securities industry and dividend-issuing corporations are also opposed to repeal, although they too must bear extra administrative costs (for withholding on dividends). Securities brokers have more important legislation pending in Congress (a bill to shorten the holding period on capital gains), and most corporations would rather pay for withholding in order to raise revenues than risk forcing Congress to impose new taxes.

BUT THE SMALLER BANKS, for which the administrative costs pose a bigger problem, continue to lobby vigorously—and even a small bank can be a big deal in an individual Congressional district. On April 19 the Senate leadership agreed to "defer" withholding until at least 1987. The practical effect is to abandon it altogether, since both houses would need to pass the withholding bill all over again at that point. "Very frankly, we didn't have the votes," Dole said afterward. With the full Senate expected to pass the deferral quickly, the focus now shifts to the House. A majority of House members support repeal, but key leaders such as Speaker O'Neill and Ways and Means Chairman Dan Rostenkowski have opposed it, and have kept the bill off the floor. President Reagan has said in the past that he would veto a repeal bill. By framing the repeal as a "compromise," Kasten said, he is trying to "give the White House some wiggle room," but a White House spokesman said the Senate move had not changed the President's mind. Should the House, in fact, agree to the Senate's proposal, and the President issue a veto, an override vote would be close.

At this point the debate is no arcane argument over tax-collection procedures. The defeat of withholding would deprive the government—and honest taxpayers—of nearly $3 billion a year, but that's not all. It would tell bank lobbyists that distortion pays, and it would tell tax cheaters that the government doesn't care enough about evasion to enforce the laws. Incentives like these we don't need.

JASON DEPARLE

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Conservatism with a kindly face?

IN DEFENSE OF THE WELFARE STATE

BY GEORGE WILL

IN 1964, a conservative citizen, speaking with the zeal of a convert, which he was, gave a nationally televised speech in support of Barry Goldwater's candidacy. The citizen denounced "people who view the tax as a means of achieving changes in our social structure." In 1981, in another speech, the same fellow said approximately the same thing: "The taxing power of government must be used to provide revenues for legitimate government purposes. It must not be used to regulate the economy or bring about social change."

Now, the consistency of Ronald Reagan's views is one of the wonders of American political life. But another wonder is that anyone, especially the fortieth President, would talk like that. No previous President has stressed as much as Ronald Reagan has the possibility and importance of changing society by changing the tax code. He obviously believes that public policies should reward and thereby nurture the attributes essential to strength (industriousness, thrift, deferral of gratification) and should discourage the attributes inimical to economic vitality (idleness, dissipation, self-indulgence). And he would not deny that laws establishing, protecting, and regulating the institution of property are examples of kinds of laws that have the effect, intended or not, of shaping the spirit of society. Tax deductions and tax exemptions are not alternatives to social programs. They are social programs. And unlike many such, they often achieve their intended effects. They alter behavior on a large scale for the advancement of chosen goals.

In the 1976 campaign for the Republican Presidential nomination, Reagan repeatedly said: "I've always thought that the best thing government can do is nothing." But surely the truth, regarding every significant aspect of social life, is that the one thing government cannot do is "nothing." This is true in two senses. First, a decision not to alter the status quo is a decision to do something. It is a decision to continue the public policies—the complex weave of laws and customs—that underlie any significant sphere of social action. Second, it is peculiar to speak as though laissez-faire policies amounted to government's "doing nothing." Conservatives rightly cultivate a saving sense of the complexity of the social organism, a sense that protects society from the overbearing political pretense that government should or can superintend all relationships. But a "free-market" economic system is a system; it is a public product, a creation of government. Any important structure of freedom is a structure, a complicated institutional and cultural context that government must nurture and sustain.

Obviously "free speech" is not free in the sense that it is free of prerequisites; it is not free of a complicated institutional frame. Free speech, as much as a highway system, is something government must establish and maintain. The government of a country without the rare and fragile traditions of civility, without education and communication capabilities, could proclaim freedom of speech and resolutely stand back. But the result would not be free speech. It would be mayhem, and the triumph of incivility. Similarly, a capitalistic economic system, with all the institutions, laws, regulations, dispositions, habits, and skills that make it work, is not part of the constitution of the universe. It does not spring up from the social soil unbidden, like prairie grass. It requires an educational system, banking and currency systems, highly developed laws of commerce, and much more.

Many conservatives are fond of the epigram that the phrase "political economy" represents the marriage of two words that should be divorced on the grounds of incompatibility. But clear-minded persons can more reasonably object to the phrase on the ground that the adjective "political" is a superfluous modifier because any economic arrangement, is, by definition, a political arrangement. Try to define "the political" in a way that severs it from any ideas central to economic life—ownership, contracts, corporations, trade unions, the right to strike, antitrust principles. Of course, before the Depression nationalized concern with "the economy," the use of the definite article would have seemed odd. Even just sixty years ago, economic statistics were so rudimentary that the central government did not know how many people were employed, or wanted to be, or what the gross national product was. It had no need to know, in the sense that it acknowledged no clear responsibility for policies that required a sophisticated national information base. But since late October 1929, the public has felt bound up

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with a single economic dynamic, and this feeling has found consistent expression in a political fact: the President is held accountable for the aggregate economic performance.

Conservatives are understandably impatient with the familiar liberal formulation about "giving human rights priority over property rights." But conservatives, in their eagerness to put government in its place (which they think is down, and far away), argue just as fatuously that "only people produce wealth; government does not." Government produces the infrastructure of society—legal, physical, educational—from highways through skills; and that is a precondition for the production of wealth. The unlovely locution "human capital" reflects the impulse to reduce all social categories to economic ones. But it also reflects a recognition that investment must be made in people before they can be socially competent. And it is obvious, once you think about it, that government is, and must be, a major investor. Very stern adherents of laissez-faire doctrine object not just to the practice of redistributing income, but even to the phrase "distribution of income." They think it implies that income is not purely "earned" but is in part just "received" as a result of social processes rather than pure individual effort. But the social processes are undeniable. So when John D. Rockefeller told Congress, in all sincerity, that "the good Lord gave me my money," he not only defined regulation as impiety, he denied government's role in the generation of wealth.

IF WE ARE TO BE properly conscious of our politics, if our politics is to be properly conscious of itself, we must be wide awake to this fact: choosing an economic system, or choosing substantially to revive significant economic policies, is a political, which means moral, undertaking. It is the authoritative assignment of values, the encouragement of some behavior and values and the discouragement of others.

If conservatism is to engage itself with the way we live now, it must address government's graver purposes with an affirmative doctrine of the welfare state. The idea of such an affirmation may, but should not, seem paradoxical. Two conservatives (Disraeli and Bismarck) pioneered the welfare state, and did so for impeccably conservative reasons: to reconcile the masses to the vicissitudes and hazards of a dynamic and hierarchical industrial economy. They acted on the principle of "economy of exertion," using government power judiciously to prevent less discriminating, more disruptive uses of power. Today the conservative affirmation of the welfare state should be grounded in three additional considerations. They are considerations of prudence, intellectual integrity, and equity. A welfare state is certainly important to, and probably indispensable to, social cohesion, and hence to national strength. A welfare state is implied by conservative rhetoric. A welfare state can be an embodiment of a wholesome ethic of common provision.

The doctrine underlying the political economy of the American welfare state was enunciated in 1877, by Chief Justice Waite, in *Munn* v. *Illinois*. The court upheld an Illinois statute regulating rates in grain elevators, holding that private property:

> becomes clothed with a public interest when used in a manner to make it of public consequence, and affect the community at large. When, therefore, one devotes his property to a use in which the public has an interest, he, in effect, grants to the public an interest in that use, and must submit to be controlled by the public for the common good, to the extent of the interest he has thus created.

The opinion proclaimed an idea whose time did not come as social policy for several generations. But it has now come and is not apt to depart. For conservatives to doubt the strength and durability of this consensus is intellectually idle and politically feckless. This consensus cannot, of course, be allowed to erase the distinction between public and private spheres. That distinction is indispensable not only to the preservation of a tolerable degree of liberty, but to the preservation of public-spiritedness as well. It is essential to the habit of subordinating some private interests to the public interest. But conservatives must come to terms with the public's assumption that private economic decisions often are permeated with a public interest and hence are legitimate subjects of political debate and intervention.

The widespread belief that economic growth would democratize prosperity—that a rising tide would raise all boats—reduced the demand for redistributionist politics, in which political decisions would determine the allocation of opportunity and wealth. But when the social question is not just how to bake a larger economic pie, but how to carve the pie, then the stakes of politics become bigger, and politics becomes more bitter. Like it or not, that is a permanent question on the national agenda. It is so because an economic order represents a political choice, and is a government product. We are all in it together, as citizens.

AMERICAN CONSERVATISM needs a Burke, a Disraeli—a self-conscious practitioner who can articulate the principles implicit in the statecraft he practices. Regarding the welfare state, conservatives practice politics more realistically than they preach. In 1953 the conservative party had a President for the first time in a generation, and that party had majorities in both Houses of Congress for the last time in more than a generation. Yet there was no attempt to undo what Franklin Roosevelt had done. Neither, however, was there an attempt to formulate a philosophically conservative rationale and program for the modern state.

A conservative doctrine of the welfare state is required if conservatives are even to be included in the contemporary political conversation. Conservatives need ways to make the welfare state more compatible with conservative values. Granted, a welfare state can aggravate the centrifugal tendencies of modern society. By enlarging the political allocation of wealth and opportunity, it can raise the stakes, and the temperature, of politics, making the state

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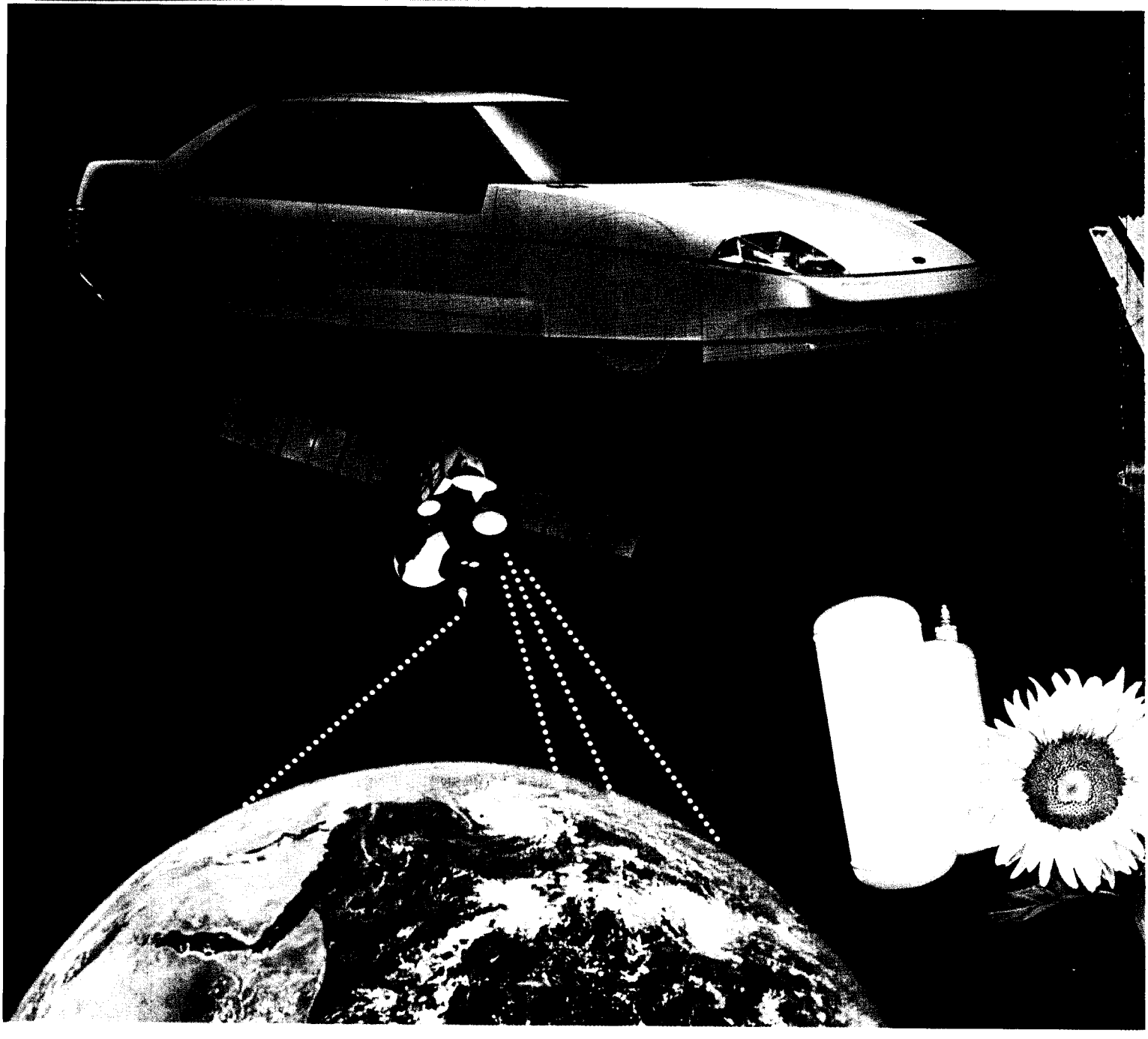

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itself much more a focus of contention than a force of cohesion. But by expressing a limited but clear ethic of common provision, a welfare state can be, on balance, unifying. It can nationalize concern for moderate and cooperative policies to promote the economic growth that alone can pay for general entitlements. A structure of public entitlements can do what private property alone cannot do: it can give everyone a stake in the stability and success of the social system.

What most conservatives know by intuition, and many liberals now know by experience, is this. Government is not efficient at providing goods and services. It is good at writing checks, and at providing incentives and disincentives that cause self-interested persons—that is, almost everybody—to behave in various ways. So a welfare state run on conservative principles will provide the poor with cash to buy necessities from the private sector, thereby reducing the need for an enormous social-service bureaucracy. And a conservative welfare state will provide incentives—such as deductions from taxes for medical-insurance premiums—to cause the private sector to weave much of the net of security that people demand in every developed, industrial society.

IN ADDITION to these conservative principles of government, there are social goals for a conservative welfare state. The first is to strengthen what Burke called the "little platoons" that are, even more meaningfully than individuals, the molecular units of society. Conservatives should be leading the fight for a welfare system that supports rather than disintegrates families. In addition, a conservative welfare state will use government to combat the tendency of the modern, bureaucratic state to standardize and suffocate diversity. To give just one example, a conservative welfare state would give to individuals tax credits—a tax subsidy—to offset tuition payments to private schools. This incentive to private education, especially at the secondary level, would stimulate competition against one of the nation's most powerful lobbies and its strongest near-monopoly, public education. This is not to disparage public education. On the contrary, public policy should encourage a leavening diversity from private sources, and should encourage bracing competition from private schools, precisely because education is the most important public business, and because public schools always will and should have by far the greater number of students.

For nearly half a century conservatism was, or felt itself to be, in the political wilderness. Although there were some conservative Presidents and some conservative legislating majorities in Congress during this period, conservatism generally was a doctrine in, and of, opposition. During this period it became cranky and recriminatory. Therefore, a question posed by the coming to power of self-conscious conservatism is this: can there be conservatism with a kindly face?

Another question is: can conservatives come to terms with a social reality more complex than their slogans? Conservatives rightly stress equality of opportunity rather than equality of outcomes. Conservatives are, therefore, fond of the metaphor of a footrace: all citizens should be roughly equal at the starting line of the race of life. But much that we have learned about early-childhood development suggests that "equality of opportunity" is a much more complicated matter than most conservatives can comfortably acknowledge. Prenatal care (which the "right to life" movement should regard as something of a "right"), infant stimulation, childhood nutrition, and especially home environment—all these and other influences affect the competence of a young "runner" as he or she approaches the academic hurdles that so heavily influence social outcomes in America. There is, of course, vast scope for intelligent disagreement as to what can and should be done to make "equality of opportunity" more than an airy abstraction. But surely it is indisputable that "equality of opportunity" can be enhanced by various forms of state action.

The most important reason conservatives should give for their vision of the welfare state is the most important reason for doing anything, politically. It is justice. Thomas Aquinas said that justice, which is giving individuals their due "with constant and perpetual will," is a "habit" (*habitus*). Justice depends, therefore, on a certain disposition. It depends on—in a sense, it is—a state of mind. A society that is organized socially and justified philosophically the way ours is must take special care to supply itself with the rhetoric, institutions, and policies which encourage that state of mind. Neither the spirit of the age nor the premises received from the past (which have produced that spirit) will do the work. The political philosophy of modernity, taking its bearings from the strongest passions, does not emphasize, and so does not nurture, the habit of regarding our fellow citizens as united in a great common enterprise.

OUR ARRANGEMENTS have been ably explicated by those who arranged them. Federalist 51 is, with the possible exception of Federalist 10, the most important short essay on the American government and psyche. Remember: "This policy of supplying by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives. . . ." It is almost as though the Founders thought they had devised a system so clever that it would work well even if no one had good motives—even if there was no public-spiritedness. But unfortunately, just as there are social roots of political behavior, there are social consequences of political behavior—and political expectations. A notion that announces, at its outset, that it can dispense with "better motives" than self-interest in politics does not encourage self-restraint, self-denial, and moderation in any sphere of life. But democracy subverts itself if it subverts the habits of self-restraint, self-denial, and public-spiritedness. That danger defines the drama of democracy in a commercial nation, a nation devoted to inflaming and satisfying appetites.

Now, just a myth can be conducive to reasonableness in

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societies, self-interestedness can be conducive to the public interest. The obvious virtue of laissez-faire economics is the voluntary performance of many socially useful functions. Its vision of a relatively frictionless mechanism of social adjustment is at once rationalistic and romantic. It is hard to say which is more American, romanticism or capitalism. Perhaps it is wrong, in America, to distinguish them.

Modernity, by assigning to man a clear but demoralizing function as an instrument of production, provoked a romantic reaction, most potently from a romantic masquerading as a "scientific" socialist: Karl Marx. But the case De Tocqueville made for our world should not be dismissed:

> The principle of self-interest rightly understood produces no great acts of self-sacrifice, but it suggests daily small acts of self-denial. By itself it cannot suffice to make a man virtuous; but it disciplines a number of persons in habits of regularity, temperance, moderation, foresight, self-command; and if it does not lead men straight to virtue by the will, it gradually draws them in that direction by their habits. If the principle of interest rightly understood were to sway the whole moral world, extraordinary virtues would doubtless be more rare; but I think that gross depravity would also be less common.

I understand, and really am reasonably cheerful about, the irrevocable triumph of modernity in justifying social orders based on wide release of passions and appetities. That is why I am so concerned about the shaping of passions and desires in the direction of virtue. By virtue I mean nothing arcane or obscure. I mean good citizenship, whose principal components are moderation, social sympathy, and willingness to sacrifice private desires for public ends.

THERE ARE THOSE who will say, as Hume did, that the principles of civic virtue are noble, "but as these principles are too disinterested, and too difficult to support, it is requisite to govern men by other passions, and animate them with a spirit of avarice and industry, art and luxury." And how soothing modernity is in asserting the easy reconciliation of private pursuits with public exigencies. But some "surgeon general of the soul," noting the problematic relationship between the premises of modernity and the social ground of civic virtue, might wish to place a warning on modern society like that found on cigarette packages: Warning—the ethos of this society may be harmful to your moral health.

John Stuart Mill wrote, "The spirit of a commercial people will be, we are persuaded, essentially mean and slavish, wherever public spirit is not cultivated by an extensive participation of the people in the business of government in detail." He may or may not have been correct about his fear and his prescription. But he unquestionably was correct about the need to plan ahead for public-spiritedness.

We need to know more about the policies and processes, the fabric of rights and duties, the sorts of involvements in particular institutions public and private, that are apt to summon the better angels of the citizenry's nature. Unfortunately, the social sciences have lost their nerve—not without reason—at a moment when we need a sociology of civic virtue, of public-spiritedness. Nevertheless, political philosophy must begin with this premise: reflection about how the individual should live is inseparable from reflection about the nature of the good society. Today we need an argument about the connection between the society we have and the kinds of individuals we want American life to nurture. This argument must involve more than the Republican and Democratic arguments about the most expeditious way to orient politics to the increase of material well-being. The argument between Manchester and Massachusetts liberalism is not unimportant in terms of public policy, but it does not reach philosophic fundamentals. All economic arrangements, whatever the mixture of free trade and protection and subsidies and entitlements, should be discussed as expedients. They should be evaluated in terms of the contributions they make to the things we value fundamentally, the things involving important political principles: equality of opportunity, neighborliness, equitable material allocation, happiness, social cohesion, justice. The idea of a finally "correct" equilibrium of ingredients of economic policy—the precisely right recipe of market and state allocations of wealth and opportunity—is a chimera. As Disraeli said, "Finality is not the language of politics."

HAVING DECIDED at the outset that all men are, self-evidently, created equal, Americans have spent two centuries pondering equality. There has never been any doubt that certain inequalities are constitutive of sound social policies; they are prerequisites for desirable social ends. A society determined to have rapid economic growth through predominantly private market mechanisms must provide the requisite rewards for the persons most proficient at generating wealth; and that means inequality. A just society is not one in which the allocation of wealth, opportunity, authority, and status is equal. Rather, it is one in which inequalities are reasonably related to reasonable social goals. Therefore justice, as well as elementary utilitarian considerations, requires a hierarchy of achievement. Furthermore, equality, when defined in terms of rights derivative from passions, is not conducive to community. And questions as to how much equality of material condition society needs or morality demands or the economy can stand are less interesting than this question: how equal a distribution of ideas and sentiments is needed for social cohesion and all that derives from it? Such cohesion depends on a revived sense of citizenship. That sense depends on rehabilitating from the ravages of modern thought and practice the status of the political vocation and of government. The place to begin is with the task of putting economic argument in its place. That place, as Jefferson and Hamilton understood, is within the political argument, and subordinate to political choices. Only then shall we have a politics that nurtures the spiritual in a nation that is predisposed by its modernity toward preoccupation with the material.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

The Double Dealers

The Draughtsman's Contract is unique. I know of no other original screenplay in English set in late seventeenth-century England and written in the manner of Restoration comedy; I can't even recall a screen adaptation of a Restoration play. Evidently the brocaded language and the masking of action by etiquette have been reasons for avoiding the period; but they are precisely the reasons for which Peter Greenaway chose it. The result doesn't prove that others were wrong to avoid it—probably they weren't—only that Greenaway was right.

The Draughtsman's Contract
(United Artists Classics)

His film is a diabolical delight. The prime term for the dramatic writing of the period is artifice; Greenaway has written and directed his film as a great overarching artifice, cantilevered by interlocking smaller artifices. Since artifice cannot be unconscious, this film (figuratively speaking) takes care not to reveal everything about itself, not even when it is finished. But we accept this as its prerogative, thus admitting that its quality earned it the prerogative. The tone of the whole work is so assured, so elegantly vicious, that the small secrets it retains seem its due.

Greenaway, now in his early forties, is English, was educated at an art school, and worked for a time as a painter and illustrator. In 1966 he began to make films, most of them short (I've seen none), that earned him an avant-garde reputation. Nothing about *The Draughtsman's Contract* is avant-garde except its daring to use Restoration forms and diction, which is certainly avant of the film garde. But Greenaway's past is shown in his painterly eye, not oppressively picturesque but sharply selective.

He has plumbed the Restoration far deeper than its locutions and finery: in Restoration style itself, he has found the moral dynamics of his story. Just after I first saw *The Draughtman's Contract* last September at the New York Film Festival, I met a poet I know and told him that the picture is like Congreve, only cruel. He said, "But Congreve is cruel." He was quintessentially right, of course. Under the Congreve glitter is, often, steely egotistic drive—sometimes, as in *The Double Dealer*, not so deeply buried. (This film could be called *The Double Dealers*.) On second viewing, I saw how Greenaway had accomplished two aims. First, he had ferreted out the cruelty under the polish, after perceiving that the polish was essential *because* of the cruelties under them. Second, he dramatized that perception by putting a murder story in that period; the blunt brutalities show the underside of the politesse.

The protagonist—even that term turns out to be an artifice—is Mr. Neville, a young draughtsman whose specialty is drawings of country estates. The time is the summer of 1694, the place a great country house in southern England which belongs to a Mr. Herbert. The film begins at a dinner where Mr. Herbert informs wife, daughter, son-in-law, and guests, including Mr. Neville, that he leaves in the morning for Southampton where, we learn, he plans to do a bit of whoring. Mrs. Herbert, a maturely attractive woman, invites Mr. Neville to remain during her husband's absence and to make twelve drawings of the house and grounds. Without alacrity, he accepts the commission, but he insists that a contract be drawn up specifying, among his conditions, that Mrs. Herbert shall provide him with the use of her body when and how he asks. Thus it seems that the haughty Mr. Neville is as much in command of the situation here as he is of his art. (The drawings we eventually see were in fact done by Greenaway.)

But the careful observer is curious. Why does Mrs. Herbert, who is clearly not enamored of the artist, consent to make her body part of the bargain? Further, though Mr. Neville gives a written schedule of the prospects he intends to draw at what times, and though he orders that each prospect be clear at that time, still in each prospect one item is out of order. A shirt is on a bush, a ladder is against a wall, a pair of boots is in a field. These objects contradict his instructions, yet the artist doesn't object, he merely includes them in the drawings. It's almost as if he were punishing Mrs. Herbert for her carelessness by putting the extraneous object in the drawing. Ultimately this vindictiveness bites the biter. Those objects are connected with crime—and more crime.

Janet Suzman, the South African actress known here through TV appearances and several films (e.g., *Nicholas and Alexandra*), doesn't seem the ideal Mrs. Herbert. She is lovely and highly competent; she gives the role everything but what she ought not to need to give it—the casual assurance that she is to the manor and manner born. On the other hand, Anthony Higgins, known

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Betrayal. Harold Pinter's dialogue is finer than the script as a whole. His scintillating cast and director make the most of that dialogue.

Max Dugan Returns. Neil Simon spins more sentimentally tangled webs. Schoolteacher falls for detective; then her long-lost father turns up—wanted by police. Some good Simon gags, some neat Herbert Ross direction. Japan could take lessons in mass production from Simon.

Monty Python's The Meaning of Life. Funny but, even more, angry. A superbly ingenious, ruthlessly clever collection of slashes at human imperfections by six of the wittiest men alive.

Tender Mercies. Robert Duvall, quietly gripping as a Texas singing star who dives down to alcoholic bottom and comes part way back. Horton Foote's script, Bruce Beresford's direction, and a perfect cast make it all a tight-lipped spiritual allegory.

SK

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more in English theater than in films, easily infuses Mr. Neville with self-confidence—an arrogance that derives from his skills in art and sex but that blinds him to other occurrences around him. Anna Louise Lambert, the Herberts' daughter, captures the cunning innocence of the gentlewoman-as-shepherdess, and Hugh Fraser, her highbred boor of a German husband, sniffs superciliously at everything English and everyone inferior that come his way while his eyes watch narrowly the property that will one day be his.

Much of the film was shot at a Stately Home in Kent, and the cinematographer, Curtis Clark, appreciates—affectionately and humorously—the petted gardens and the cozy mansion. He lights interiors dexterously, using fat candles that seem to provide the color and that also balance the compositions. Sue Blane's costumes are splendid in two senses, though those formidable male periwigs batter us into submission from the start. Michael Nyman has written an exceptionally helpful score which, like much in the picture, combines authenticity with an edge of parody—the vigor and song of Locke and Blow and Purcell used with knowledge and with overview.

A sort of parallel exists between Mr. Neville and his author Greenaway. Mr. Neville is making drawings that are ostensibly symmetrical but are a bit disturbed by intrusions. Greenaway has made a film that looks symmetrical but is subtly and increasingly out of moral balance. For instance, the opening and closing shots are seemingly symmetrical: both are close-ups of a person eating fruit, the first of Mr. Herbert tasting a plum, the latter of a bronze-green naked figure gorging on a pineapple. (This figure is almost mystical: a kind of court jester on the grounds who sometimes climbs porticos or sits on a statuary horse or stands peeing into a fountain and who is not invisible or mistaken for bronze because at one point a guest swats him away with a hat.) The seeming symmetry of opening and close is really a contradiction between Mr. Herbert, who has left the film, and this nonspiritual spirit.

Contradictions are integral to Greenaway's system here: contradictions between the punctilio and the serpentine lusts and deceits: between the harmony of the setting and the disharmony of murder: between the extravagant courtesies and the barely covered Catholic-Protestant hatreds (1694 is only five years after the Glorious Revolution): between the Neville who is a coolly perfect draughtsman and the Neville who is a coolly ravishing satyr.

All these contradictions are, as noted, mined by Greenaway out of the style that he has chosen. Evidently he has understood that the very name of the style, Baroque, is itself a contradiction, a word that means both grotesque and intricately ornamented. Those exquisitely contradictory meanings suit this exquisitely wrought film.

TALKIN' MOSCOW BLUES

Red and Hot: the Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917-1980 by S. Frederick Starr

(Oxford University Press, 321 pp., $16.95)

Sometime in 1957 or so, a friend of mine traveled to Russia. He was a professional translator and spoke the language with ease. Like all Czech tourists in those days, he deposited, among his underwear, a good supply of brassieres, and put on a layer of three raincoats made of a kind of transparent plastic that the popular mind had nicknamed "condom-coats" (*špecáky*). To divert the attention of the Soviet customs officers from his valuable black-market goods, he displayed, on top of his belongings in his luggage, a British edition of Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. The ruse worked. After longish consultations, the customs men confiscated the still dubious book of the recently rehabilitated writer and failed to notice both the incongruous articles of clothing in a single man's bag, and the triple layer of plastic on his perspiring body. My friend then sold his brassieres in Moscow, exchanged some for internationally accepted female services, but kept one of his condom-coats for Odessa. He had just begun translating Babel, then in the process of partial rekosherization, and wanted to see the setting of his stories. In a crooked street of the ancient harbor he showed his wares to a group of young, modish-looking men. Instead of money he was offered—a record. "A record?" "Yes," said the prospective buyer, and added with awe: "It's an Eddie Rosner!"

The owner of the coat knew nothing about Rosner and very little about jazz. But the fact that the youngster apparently held the record to be the market equivalent of the commodity then in greatest demand indicated to him the status of Rosner on the Soviet jazz Olympus, and he remembered me. Obviously, the precious disc would make a nice present for a jazz buff. In a moment of selfless magnanimity he accepted the deal. Had he persisted in his intention to bring me a souvenir from Russia I would have heard the music of the legendary Soviet swing star (he was a German Jew, chased by political disasters from his native Berlin to Warsaw, to Moscow, to the Gulag). However, things turned out differently, and I have yet to hear the sounds that fascinated Kolyma.

Late at night that day, returning to his hotel, my friend found the doorman, in his resplendent uniform, dozing off in a chair next to the empty front desk. He woke him up and asked for the key to his room. The doorman opened his eyes, for a while listened incredulously, then got up, stretched his limbs, inflated his giant chest, and, in the glitter of several rows of medals, metamorphosed into—a Soviet army officer. "*Ya genieral!*" he said threateningly. Then his eyes rested on the record in my friend's hands. It was in a homemade brown paper sleeve, on which the proud previous owner, in shaky *azbuka*, inscribed the holy name: EDDIE ROSNER. The general reached for the disc. My terrified friend did not put up any resistance. But the general's gesture was not one of confiscation. He offered a sum for the contraband that made my friend forget about friendship and succumb to greed.

I include this story by way of example

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of the kind of associations aroused in the mind of a graduate of the two European totalitarianisms by Frederick Starr's unique history of jazz in the land of the Soviets. The book is full of stories of this and similar kind, often reaching the level of top-quality surrealism. Veritable bicycles on the operating table. Imagine, for instance, Graf Werner von Schulenburg, the Nazi envoy to Moscow, scribbling an amazed secret report for Ribbentrop in Berlin: at a very official diplomatic party, celebrating the seventeenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, the count had just witnessed Marshal Voroshilov fox-trotting with his wife in front of the entire assembled Politburo, to the wild sounds of a Czech jazz band imported from Prague. Imagine professional Soviet saxophonists who, after the banning of Adolphe Sax's bourgeois invention, are forced to turn in their horns at the Musicians Union offices, and are issued bassoons and oboes instead (not bourgeois, because feudal); apparently they had to requalify overnight for their assigned instruments if they wished to remain members of their Union. And what about the notorious Lazar Kaganovich, one of Stalin's dreaded henchmen, as the author of a successful textbook entitled *How to Organize Railway Ensembles and Jazz Orchestras*?

I suppose that's what's called dialectics. Years ago when, in a story called "Eine kleine Jazzmusik," I reproduced from memory a Nazi Gauleiter's wartime list of dance music taboos, most readers suspected me of confusing memory with satirical imagination. "On no account will Negroid excesses in tempo . . . be tolerated," quoth the Gauleiter of my memories.

> Strictly prohibited is the use of . . . all mutes which turn the noble sound of wind and brass instruments into a Jewish-Freemasonic yowl (so called wa-wa). . . . The double bass must be played solely with the bow . . . plucking the strings is prohibited,

etc. Well, in Starr's book, in a passage well documented in footnote references, one reads: "Chords built on flatted fifths . . . were judged anathema to good taste and censored. . . . To own a Harmon (wa-wa) trumpet mute was tantamount to preaching the doctrines of Adam Smith . . . and plucking the bass viol (instead of bowing it) could put a bassist under a cloud of suspicion." All this, and much more, occurred during the post-World War II drive to stop the spreading of *too much rhythm*, which flooded Russia during the war. Like so many non-Marxist ideas in the dangerous years that nearly toppled Stalin, jazz was tolerated because things like jazz or patriotism boosted the morale of the fighting men, and helped to save Mother Russia. As an unwanted side-effect, they saved Daddy Stalin as well, and his patience with jazz, enforced by circumstances, was gone.

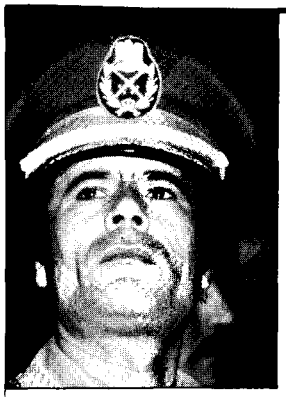
But Starr's book is not merely a collection of anecdotes and absurdities, and I would not like to create that impression. It is an absorbing and exhaustive work of scholarship; indeed, a pioneering work because, as the author accurately observes,

> The impact of the Bolshevik Revolution on American politics, diplomacy and literature has been the object of much study. The impact in Russia of America's democratic and liberationist upheaval in popular culture remains terra incognita.

Not quite incognita after Starr's book.

THE HISTORY of the two phenomena starts with an ironic coincidence; during the same week in November 1917 the Bolsheviks conquered the Winter Palace in Petrograd and, in New Orleans, the brothels of Storyville were closed down. The first occurrence inaugurated the October Revolution, the second caused the exodus of jazzmen up the river and into the world. Soon the two revolutionary movements were to meet and, inevitably, clash in Soviet Russia: for one of them represented the elitist approach that strove to shape mass attitudes "from above," the other spontaneously shaped mass tastes (and attitudes) "from below."

Lenin was a master of "scientifically" exploiting existing spontaneous tendencies for his own purpose; his successors, instead of exploiting, more often than not simply tried to suppress. They did it also in the name of "science." And so the history of jazz in the Soviet Union runs parallel to the histories of other arts in that country. It drags on in a kind of yo-yo movement, alternating between periods of relaxation and periods of clampdowns. During benign



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LIBYAN SANDSTORM

The Complete Account of Qaddafi's Revolution
by John K. Cooley

A New Republic Book • Holt, Rinehart and Winston

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times, a Soviet marshal swings to the call of the saxophones; during seasons of frost, a pioneer jazzman like Valentin Parnakh is arrested for exceeding the permitted percentage of syncopation, and perishes anonymously in the Gulag. A nauseating story that nauseatingly yo-yos to this very day. While I am writing this, the Jazz Section of the Musicians Union in Prague is under attack and, I'm afraid, in the process of being disbanded, because it published for its members a book of graphic music, another one on the music of the Theresienstadt Ghetto, and a *History of Rock 'n' Roll in Czechoslovakia*, which lists (and prints pictures of) some rock singers who left the country after the tanks had rolled in.

THERE ARE little ironic twists. In the full frost of Stalin's last years, the Obratsov Puppet Theater is thronged every night because the nasty satire on decadent Hollywood on the stage is accompanied by jazz from genuine American records. Can the censor object? How could he? The decadent music is part of the biting satire on U.S. decadence. A rather nonsensical British film comedy set in World War II also plays to full houses. Why? Because its hero, a British jazz-bassist-spy, uses his bowless rhythmic plucking to transmit coded messages over the radio. The ban on plucking clearly does not apply in this case. And at the time Parnakh is dying in the Gulag, Eddie Rosner and his band, all of them arrested, arrive in the same Gulag only to be summoned immediately to the camp commander. It turns out this man used to listen to Rosner's jazz in the trenches—a memory obviously stronger than whatever political convictions the commander has now. Rosner and his men are issued instruments and spend the next five or six years playing as convicts in various camps, until they attain the status of what is virtually a feudal court orchestra of serfs in the house of the all-powerful Alexander Derevenko, the grand duke of the entire camp system in the East. His 250-pound wife Galina loves to do the swing.

Stories like these indicate why the Soviet efforts to eradicate spontaneous art forms remained unsuccessful although they caused much suffering, and even death. As Starr puts it, one unique thing about Soviet jazz is that the attempt to purge it was the only Stalinist purge that failed.

What went wrong?

It has to do again with the shibboleth of "science": with the peculiar nature of "scientific" (as different from "utopian") socialism, better known in the West as Marxism-Leninism.

Nothing against science. All modern societies make use of it, even contemporary shamans of medieval obscurantism fly the friendly sky, and they are not carried by flying carpets either. The trouble with Soviet science—at least in the humanities, though occasionally in natural and technical sciences as well—is that it is a strange pseudointellectual structure that combines two incongruous elements. First, there is science proper; "bourgeois" science, i.e., the only real science there is. This is the heritage of Marx who, in this and in other senses, was profoundly bourgeois, and though he sometimes relied on sources of dubious validity (as, for example, when he was drooling over the successes of nineteenth-century American communes, obviously unaware of Hawthorne), he, as a rule, respected verifiable reality.

Then there is "class" science, or "class approach" to science—the tragic and grotesque inheritance of Lenin. There is no doubt that Lenin was a genius of political organization, of subversion, of manipulation. But perhaps the most essential part of his bequest—unwitting, maybe—is the unackowledged (at times—at other times fully acknowledged) *Führerprinzip* that permeates the entire structure of the Party and eventually of society. Power in such a structure emanates from the Führer, the leader, *el lidre, duce*, chairman, whatever his title may be. It willy-nilly begets lesser Führers, not only in the political sphere, but in all branches and walks of life. Participating in the power from above, most of them succumb to the illusion that the source of power is also the source of infallible wisdom—scientifically infallible wisdom—and that they participate in this wisdom as well. And so it happens that the Führer likes a charlatan dabbler in genetics who dislikes the founder of genetics, ergo the founder could not have been a scientist, ergo the science based on his theories is a nonscience: a bourgeois science. Or the Führer is not fond of syncopation, ergo the only good jazz is one without syncopes.

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In essence, this is a vulgarized form of the scholastic method of referring to the *auctoritates*. In the Middle Ages it produced such curious situations as the mandatory belief in the horse's heart being in its right side, contrary to the evidence of the battlefield, because Aristotle taught so. Its Soviet form, as Starr notes, leads often to devising elaborate arguments intended to prove that the Führer's dislike of an instrument's timbre is a scientific assessment of that timbre's decadent nature directly attributable to the disintegration of outdated bourgeois Weltanschauung. The history of Soviet jazz is, therefore, also the story of incredible, often absurd meanderings of the ideologue's "scientific" false consciousness.

IN THE FIRST decade of Soviet power, marked by attempts to marry the revolution to modern art, jazz was part of the package; it was seen as a radically new, and therefore progressive, art form. Science had to wait for Maxim Gorky. In his epoch-making article, "On the Music of the Gross," he made a discovery: jazz, far from being revolutionary, was in fact counterrevolutionary—a characteristically bourgeois type of music. After all, wasn't it played exclusively in the plush salons of international hotels for the enjoyment of the rich? Moreover, jazz breathed out an unbridled sexuality: a clearly decadent feature, typical not for the struggling working class but for the ladies and gentlemen of leisure. "Listening for a few minutes to these wails, one involuntarily imagines an orchestra of sexually driven madmen conducted by a man-stallion brandishing a huge genital member." (These early Soviet artists seem to have been obsessed with the idea of a superpenis. As you will remember, the prudish Upton Sinclair withdrew his financial support for Eisenstein's Mexican film after he had discovered some of the filmmaker's drawings: one of them captured the Calvary scene where Jesus's penis winds snakelike around the cross and up the cross of the crucified criminal on his right who is engaged in an act of oral sex with the Savior's member.) To account for the fact that so many Negroes, men and women of a clearly oppressed class, were prominent among the creators of this decadent music, Gorky reached into the very heart of the dialectical method: these Negroes "undoubtedly laugh in their sleeves to see how their white masters are evolving toward a savagery which they themselves are leaving behind." To this gem of insight Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Public Enlightenment, added another pearl of his own: jazz, according to him, was a deliberate capitalist plot "to make man live through his sexual organs, so that during the intervals between work he will be preoccupied with these sides of his existence," and will forget about class struggle. Jazz is simply a replacement of religion, the old opium of the people, now semibanned.

Gorky was an *auctoritates* of the first order, and so was Lunacharsky. Nothing short of an even more scientific proof—because delivered by an even more authoritative authority—could save jazz in the U.S.S.R. now. The result was the first jazz witch-hunt. In Moscow several schoolgirls were expelled from school for admitting their love for jazz. People were fined for possessing jazz records.

But those incorrigibles who wanted to listen to the music, progressive or decadent, were on the lookout, and eventually found new *auctoritates*—and consequently new proofs: in this case authorities sanctified by the fact that they were both ardent Communists and native-born Americans, i.e., fellow-countrymen of the black originators of the controversial music. From men like Charles E. Smith and the notorious Mike Gold they borrowed the idea that there was not just one jazz, but two. (Gold formulated a theory that must have been a godsend to the other arch-enemy of jazz, the Nazis: jazz, according to him, was created not just by the Negroes, but by the two most oppressed ethnic groups in America together: the Negroes and the Jews. In other words, it was a judeonegroid music—which was the term actually used by the Nazi critics.) The bourgeois, decadent, sex-laden type of jazz, performed in the salons by and for the gross—and the folksy, proletarian one, devoid of eroticism and played somewhere in the South. Calling this type "hot" jazz, and opposing it to the "sweet" charming jazz of the bourgeoisie, Gold and Smith claimed that the prototype of the correct form was the music of the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, the Wolverines, etc., in short, early Dixieland, and the music of their black successors that stemmed from it. The Manichean distinction led, among other things, to new scientific discoveries such as the presentation of Duke Ellington as a proletarian practitioner of folk.

It was this proletarian hot jazz that was to be imitated and emulated. And so people like Alexander Tsfasman, Georgi Landsberg, Alexander Varlamov, Yakv Skomorowsky, Leonid Utesov, and others imitated and emulated. The first witch-hunt ended in a victory for jazz, and for another decade or so the saxophones wailed to the buff's heart's desire. However, one must be tone deaf, or a eunuch, not to hear the pulse of sexual joy in "hot" jazz. There was apparently something wrong with the theories of the apologists. Stalin himself sensed a flaw and Soviet science soon found an explanation. Yes, jazz was basically a music of the oppressed black proletariat; however, it contained both healthy and decadent elements, such as the overwhelming sexuality. These were an expression of the otherwise joyless life under capitalism. The task for the Soviet jazzmen, who lived under conditions of almost pure bliss, was to sift the music through the filter of their "new" reality, keep what was healthy, and eliminate the "inheritance of the past." In 1938, at the height of the purges, an orchestra was founded for that specific purpose and endowed with two million rubles: the State Jazz Orchestra. The irreformable Alexander Tsfasman declined to have anything to do with the abomination, but eleven of his fourteen men were simply dragooned into government service, "like serfs being moved from one estate to another." Two musicians were even released from the Gulag to assure the group's quality. No doubt it was a group of quality; it must have been with all the science that went into its creation. Unfortunately, unenlightened audiences failed to detect any jazz in it, save for the one in the band's name. An eyewitness comments:

> The indignation . . . was stormy and the fiasco complete. . . . A large contingent of Red Air Force pilots drove over to the show and were infuriated at the absence of jazz. . . . Booing, hissing and shouting ended in near riot. The musicians considered themselves lucky to have escaped with their lives.

After a series of such debacles the State Jazz Orchestra lingered on for some time—and then was saved by the war. Science was forgotten and, by popular demand of the fighting sol-

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diers, jazz bands proliferated: not just "hot" bands but apparently all kinds of bourgeois mixtures. Even the State Orchestra resumed syncopating.

After the victory, however, this state of affairs became intolerable, and renewed scientific fervor resulted in a new analysis. The old comments of Gorky were dusted off by Victor Gorodinsky in what must be the culmination of Soviet music scholarship: a book entitled *Music of Spiritual Poverty*. "Only a slanderer," concluded Gorodinsky, "could assert that jazz was America's folk music. . . . One cannot speak of styles in jazz . . . 'sweet,' 'hot,' 'swing,' 'boogie woogie,' etc."—they are all the same. The American *Daily Worker* added more information: "The musical language of American folk music and jazz not only are different, but they are opposed to each other in principle." Finally, the case was sealed by the greatest—because black American—authority of them all: Paul Robeson. Writing in *Soviet Music* (and "blatantly feathering his own nest," adds Starr), Robeson argued that the only true Negro music of America was vocal, i.e., spirituals and the blues. Instrumental jazz was played only by "debased Negroes," and it "prostituted and ruthlessly perverted the genuine expression of folk life."

With Paul Robeson, science said its last word, and the police took over. Parnakh, Sergei Kobasev, and others perished; Rosner, Piatigorsky, Alekseev, Gorin, Landsberg, Sapozhnin, and a great number of Latvians, Lithuanians, Azerbaidjanis, and other second-class citizens of the U.S.S.R. disappeared for long years into the Gulag. Tsfasman was stripped of his post as director of the Radio Orchestra, and the State Jazz Band was ordered to forget about syncopation once again. Prokofiev's *Lieutenant Kijé* was struck from the repertoire because its score called for a saxophone.

A COMEDY of errors—and terrors. Then Stalin died, eventually Khrushchev took over, the story dragged on. There was relaxation, proliferation, crackdowns, the success of jazz festivals in fringe republics (the very first jazz festival in the world was held in Tallin in Estonia in 1948, when virtually all jazz was forbidden in Moscow, and six years before the first Newport Jazz Festival), the emergence of the first sophisticated Soviet jazzmen, then accommodation with the government,

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new conflicts, simply the old yo-yo, and, eventually, emigration of many to America. In the end, as everywhere else, jazz as mass music died a natural death. A new form—rock 'n' roll—invaded the paradise of proletarian purity, and the attention of the scientist was turned toward this new target.

A hopeless story of a dreary, decades-long struggle, told excitingly by a man who knows what he is writing about. Against its backdrop, Starr projects the lives of the protagonists. Essentially they are all tragic lives, with, perhaps, one or two exceptions: theoretician Joseph Schillinger who, after frequent interrogations by the G.P.U. (forerunner of the K.G.B.), managed to emigrate to the States in 1928, where he developed his unique theories and became the esteemed teacher of many jazz greats, from Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey to Gerry Mulligan and John Lewis. But otherwise, these lives range from death in the Gulag to the frustrated cynicism of the old pioneers who have had too many ups and downs, or have made too many degrading compromises not to feel exhausted, and often disgusted, even disgusted with themselves. A *pars pro toto* is Leonid Utesov, one of the most famous ones, whose early tongue-in-cheek skit which made the argument that jazz had been invented not in New Orleans but in rowdy and brawling Odessa, his native town, turned out to be emblematic for the progress of Soviet musical science. Utesov obviously loved the music dearly, but he did not have the guts of his colleague and rival, the great Alexander Tsfasman, who, at the height of Stalinist terror, when everybody else was trembling in ideologically correct *rubashkas* at Musicians Union's meetings, used to strut through Moscow's cafés in a tailor-made maroon suit with a dove-gray Stetson on his head. When attacked by the dangerous Association of Proletarian Musicians as a "musical prostitute," Utesov quickly dropped his "St. Louis Blues" and fled under the protective wings of Shostakovich, who provided his band with a few tame and uninteresting fox-trots, and, as if that were not enough, Utesov talked Isaac Dunaevsky, the "optimist" of Soviet light music (he eventually committed suicide), into the delivery of four orchestral fantasies based on "Soviet" folk songs. Then he completed his capitulation by a savage attack on Duke Ellington in 1939, the year of the Stalin-Hitler treaty and other horrors.

Like Peter, he denied his Christ when things got precarious; but when the dangers abated, he showed his true face. In 1971, during Ellington's visit to Moscow, he had himself photographed with the Duke, and eulogized him with passion and sincerity. Turning seventy, he described his schizophrenic situation, which, in fact, is the predicament of every creative "new Soviet man":

> Do you think [he told an American visitor] we Soviet musicians don't know what jazz is? For ourselves, when we are alone, we play in a style that Benny Goodman would envy. Believe me, I'm not bragging: I know what I'm talking about. But for the public we play something different, something "lively." We are forced to pull our left ear with our right hand and our right ear with our left hand. We work as, in ancient times, Comrade Aesop worked. . . . But what else can we do? What can we do when the censor doesn't allow us to breathe; when a certain Apostolov sits on the Central Committee, a stooge who studied with a military bandmaster; when a certain Vartanov sits in the Ministry of Culture, a creep of a clarinet player; when there is a stone-hearted group of song-hacks and tunesmiths in charge of the Union of Composers? Yes, that is how it is.

Reading laments like these, one must think of identical complaints in the famous Dovzhenko diaries, of Solzhenitsyn's *The Calf and the Oak*, with its detailed documentation of editor Tvardovski's ordeals; of the many memoirs published in languages inaccessible—alas—to a vast majority of Americans. Without idealizing the situation of Western jazzmen, writers, filmmakers, and artists in general, one must, I think, in the end agree with Miloš Forman when he explains why he prefers emigration to Communism: ". . . there is always the chance that you will find some fool who will let you have the money you need."

Yes, it is a hopeless, dreary story of a decades-long struggle. A mere variation on the story of all creative arts in the Soviet Union. The sad story of a revolution based on the principle of an avant-garde of *Besserwissers*.

Fortunately, in every society, including the scientific ones, another principle is also at work which, so far, has always saved art. It was formulated by a man who himself was not a scientist, merely a country lawyer turned politician. According to him, you can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time. But you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. Frederick Starr's remarkable and exquisitely readable book is a good illustration of the workings of that principle.

JOSEF ŠKVORECKÝ

Josef Škvorecký is a Czech novelist who lives in Toronto. He is author most recently of *The Bass Saxophone* (Knopf).

THE PRAGMATIST

A Stroll With William James
by Jacques Barzun

(Harper & Row, 288 pp., $16.50)

Everybody who reads William James's letters falls in love with the man. He seems the companion nobody ever had: the one who never gets depressed or angry or bored, is always honest and open, always thinks you interesting. Somehow James, in his early thirties, managed to shuck off all his neuroses, all those fantasies that lead the rest of us to distort and manipulate other people for our own self-protection. After frightening bouts of melancholia during his twenties, accompanied by an inability to harness his own energies, suddenly he changes into Whitehead's "adorable genius"—fluent, focused, and indefatigable. Barzun once asked Whitehead what he had meant by that much-quoted phrase. Whitehead replied, "Greatness with simplicity; I mean by greatness the absence of smallness in *any* respect." This sort of greatness brought its reward. James seems to have spent the rest of his life, as Barzun says, "among a perfect galaxy of long, unbroken friendships." Even his marriage was happy; even his children liked him. His letter to his dying father

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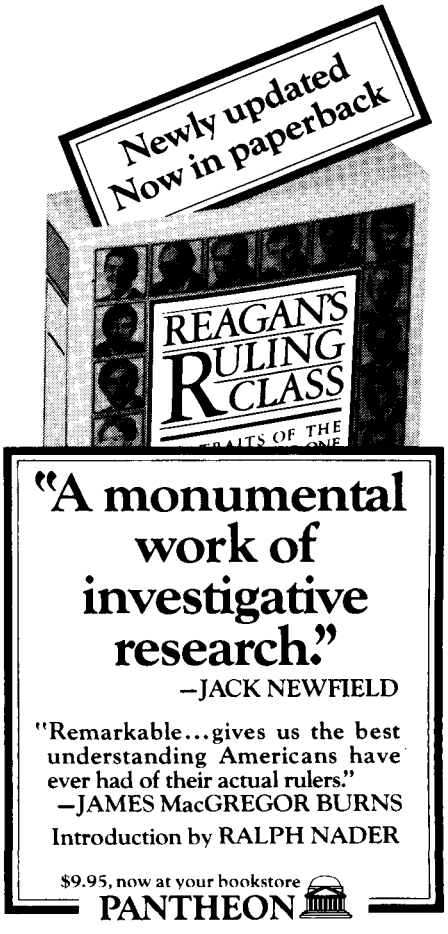
is the one everyone wishes he or she had had, or will have, the charity and the courage to write. The lifelong pleasure he and his brother Henry took in one another (*pace* Leon Edel) seems little short of a miracle.

Sheer envy of such a life has helped make frequent the sneer, cited by Barzun, that James "was greater as a man than as a philosopher." Barzun argues that he was about as great as a philosopher gets. What Barzun likes best is James's "radical empiricism"—the insistence, which runs from *The Principles of Psychology* through *Varieties of Religious Experience*, that experience reveals more than natural science knows. For Barzun, James's great virtue is his resistance to "reductionism"—the claim, common to T.H. Huxley in James's day and to B.F. Skinner in ours, that everything ought to be made as "scientific" as possible. Barzun rightly says that such attempts dehumanize and distort science along with everything else. He places James, very helpfully, against the background of the various movements of the 1890s that spoke for art against science, for "life" against mechanism. He associates James with Nietzsche and Shaw as well as with Bergson and Whitehead. He thinks that much that has happened since James's day has reinforced James's attempt to put science in its place, to resist what Whitehead called "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness." This is the fallacy of thinking that the vocabulary of the natural sciences is somehow in closer touch with reality than the vocabulary of poetry, mystical theology, or common sense.

THE TROUBLE with this defense of James, however, is that it is ambiguous between two philosophical positions, just as James's own writings were ambiguous. The first position says that the whole notion of "being in touch with reality" is silly. Truth is not "correspondence with reality," it is simply the property of beliefs that work. The virtue of a vocabulary is not its ability to represent reality accurately, but rather its ability to get us what we want. This is the position James called "pragmatism." The second position—"radical empiricism"—says that some vocabularies are deeper, truer to "experience" than others, and that the vocabulary of the physical sciences is a lot less deep than some others. James said that pragmatism and radical empiricism were independent theses, but he did not see that they point in opposite directions. The reason James's reputation as a philosopher has suffered is not, as Barzun says, the persistence of "the Idealist tradition." Rather it is that, as the century has worn on, philosophical opposition to scientism has taken the form of opposition to any form of metaphysics—physicalistic, vitalist, idealist, or whatever. The radical empiricist side of James, the line of thought he shared with Bergson and Whitehead, began to look less attractive, because it seemed a futile attempt to beat science at its own game, to find a way of speaking that more accurately represented how things were than did physics. For Heidegger, for example, scientism came to seem merely one variant of the true enemy, which was the metaphysical urge itself. Process philosophy seemed merely scientism turned on its head. From another angle, Wittgenstein challenged the idea that there was anything called "experience" to express—anything that mediated between our vocabularies and the referents of those vocabularies. For the later Wittgenstein, equations and emotional states are equally concrete or equally abstract, and so the concrete-abstract distinction loses its point.

The pragmatist side of James can be quoted in support of this Wittgensteinian view, but the radical empiricist side is full of Bergsonian nostalgia for the rich, whooshy, sensuous flux we bathed in before conceptual thought started to dry us out. If one wants to defend James as a philosopher, one has either to rehabilitate the metaphysical urge—the urge to get in direct contact with something called "reality" or "experience"—or else drop the radical empiricism and stick to the pragmatism. Barzun gives a sympathetic account of James's pragmatism—defending it yet again against the hackneyed charge that it is an apology for American hucksterism—but he does not see how deeply it cuts. He still takes seriously the sort of philosophical problem pragmatism is supposed to dissolve, as when he says that "the mystery remains why concepts and their equations happen to fit observed relations among things." This remains a mystery only on a correspondence theory of truth.

James wanted to defend his father's right to be a Swedenborgian as on all fours with Huxley's right to be an agnostic, but his treatment of religion is as ambiguous as the rest of his thought. Sometimes, as in certain parts of "The Will to Believe" (an essay that is not really as "simple, straightforward and carefully qualified" as Barzun says it is), he claims that belief in God is a live and forced option. Elsewhere he suggests that belief in God cashes out as the adoption of a certain moral attitude (e.g., willingness to take "moral holidays"). Sometimes, as Barzun says, he seems to sidestep the need for fideism by appealing to "the perfectly natural experience of 'spirit,' " where "spirit" describes "a quality perceived as other than physical or strictly intellectual." At other times he eschews appeals to "perceived qualities of experience" and treats the physical-spiritual distinction as a misleadingly metaphysical way of expressing a difference between styles of life. Philosophers who try to teach "The Will to Believe" together with *Pragmatism* are always asked by their students to resolve these ambiguities, but there is no easy way to do so. When James is disparaged as a philosopher, it is mostly by philosophers who have realized that he can be quoted to excellent effect on both sides of many of the issues he discusses.



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There are, however, philosophical virtues other than consistency and argumentative rigor. Neither Nietzsche nor James were strong in either respect, but they were the most original philosophers of their time, and the ones of whom we can still make the most use. Of the two, James was the less obsessive and the more generous, Nietzsche the more powerful and more resentful. Neither could quite make up his mind whether to offer a new metaphysics or to abjure metaphysics, but such waffling does not greatly matter. Between the two of them, they sketched out the possibility of a freer, more romantic, more playful, form of philosophical life—a possibility that our century is still exploring.

Barzun's book is, as its title suggests, an appreciation rather than a biography, a philosophical analysis, or a commentary. Sometimes, when Barzun finds just the right turn of phrase to express James's attitude on a certain issue, it is splendidly illuminating. At other times, when Barzun turns away from James to take pot shots at contemporary intellectual fashions that he despises, it loses focus. But Barzun is the sort of person James liked to stroll with. Of the dozens of books about him that have appeared in the last seventy years, James might have liked this one the best.

RICHARD RORTY

Richard Rorty is the author most recently of *Consequences of Pragmatism* (University of Minnesota Press).

IKE REVISED

The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader by Fred I. Greenstein

(Basic Books, 286 pp., $16.95)

Two years after Dwight Eisenhower left the White House, Arthur Schlesinger Sr. asked a panel of seventy-five authorities to rank America's thirty-one Presidents. Eisenhower placed twenty-first, in a dead heat with Chester Arthur. At the time Fred Greenstein did not question that low rating. As a student he had voted against Eisenhower both in 1952 and 1956, and "before the decade was over," he recalls,

> I had my own students and was teaching them to view Eisenhower in the same fashion that most of my colleagues and all of the journalists I respected viewed him—as a good-natured bumbler, who lacked the leadership qualities to be an effective president.

That was a common impression in this period. Wanting in energy and motivation, Eisenhower, critics maintained, was more interested in correcting the arc of his golf stroke than in affairs of state, and so weak in intellect that it was said he insisted memos be no longer than one page so that his lips would not get tired. A poor administrator, he intruded military procedures—a chief of staff, excessive delegation of authority, inordinate reliance on formal meetings of institutions like the Cabinet—into the White House where they were inappropriate. Instead of running the government, Eisenhower, critics asserted, left himself at the mercy of subordinates like John Foster Dulles who funneled information through channels. The unhappy outcome could be seen at press conferences where again and again the President confessed ignorance when pointed questions were asked. At an Eisenhower press conference, one correspondent noted, "numbers and genders collide, participles hang helplessly and syntax is lost forever." In sum, Eisenhower was seen, Greenstein writes, "as an aging hero who reigned more than he ruled."

In recent years writers have come to take a more favorable view of Eisenhower, and Greenstein, professor of politics at Princeton, has been perhaps the foremost figure in the movement to rehabilitate Ike. Not a few historians are now saying that Eisenhower deserves a much higher ranking, for he presided over an era of peace and prosperity, brought the Korean War to an end, silenced Joe McCarthy, legitimated the New Deal, and curbed the Pentagon, assertions that other historians have been reluctant to accept.

The Hidden-Hand Presidency is only indirectly concerned with that debate. Greenstein states that in this volume he does not ask whether Eisenhower chose proper policies but rather what kind of a leader he was. He is interested in means, not ends. He hypothesizes that since none of Eisenhower's successors matched his record of serving eight years, Ike may well have been more politically effective than he was thought to be. Moreover, writers like Murray Kempton and Garry Wills had offered promising leads in suggesting that Eisenhower's innocent facade concealed an adroit politician. Finally, the opening of the Eisenhower archives in Abilene has made it possible to examine Ike's performance in a way that was not available to commentators two decades ago.

Though far from uncritical, Greenstein rebuts each of the familiar aspersions about Eisenhower. Thought to be a muddled thinker, Eisenhower was actually capable of "dispassionate closely reasoned assessments." Regarded as a hopeless stylist, he wrote, in fact, with "geometric precision," as his private correspondence and diaries reveal. Far from being indolent, he carried on a busy schedule of activities. Not at all indifferent to public affairs, he left his imprint on a wide range of topics from economic policy to relations with China. An excellent administrator, he compares very favorably with his predecessors in this regard. Greenstein is particularly persuasive in showing Eisenhower's capacity to take a complex issue and strip it down to its fundamental components. Indeed, it is hard to see how, after considering Greenstein's evidence, anyone can continue to perceive Eisenhower as nothing more than, in a phrase of the 1950s, "a captive hero."

EISENHOWER'S most striking success, Greenstein asserts, came in his ability to carry off the demanding assignment of being both chief of state and political executive. In Great Britain these roles are assigned to two people—the king and the prime minister. But in America the same person is expected to be a monarch who epitomizes the unity of the nation and a political leader. The more he concentrates on his role of chief of state, the more the nation will complain about his lack of initiative on public policy. If he centers his attention

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on policy, however, he becomes a divisive agent who fails to fulfill the expectation that he will be magistrate of all the people. Eisenhower, Greenstein says, resolved this dilemma through "hidden-hand leadership." On the premise that a President will lose public respect if his role as chief of state is diminished, Eisenhower calculatedly masked his active involvement, often by feigning confusion at press conferences, to such an extent that contemporary analysts were led to the false conclusion that he was a passive President. In fact, Greenstein asserts, hidden-hand leadership made it possible for Eisenhower to retain a large popular following without sacrificing his role as a shaper of policy.

YET GREENSTEIN is not an uncritical admirer of hidden-hand leadership. "While it may permit the president to achieve what would be a controversial outcome without backlash," he writes, "it also has intrinsic limitations in situations where the object of influence can best be persuaded if he thinks the action urged on him is one the president wants him to take." Furthermore, Greenstein cautions, the hidden-hand style is most appropriate "for producing incremental change," and is not so good "for sparking major sequences of change."

To test how the hidden-hand approach worked out in practice, Greenstein devotes the longest of his six chapters to dissecting the claim that Eisenhower, by refusing to respond directly to Joe McCarthy's allegations, denied him the public attention on which he fed and so brought about his downfall. It is not always easy to follow the argument in this chapter, but on balance Greenstein appears to support this contention, though guardedly. He questions whether a confrontation would have produced better results and he shows in detail the ways in which the President, however belatedly, maneuvered behind the scenes to sustain McCarthy's foes.

Greenstein also acknowledges, though, that "Eisenhower was far from being the only (or even the decisive) agent of McCarthy's political demise" and that there were "severe costs" in the President's hidden-hand method of dealing with the Wisconsin Senator. Ike's talent for obscuring matters might serve him well in some areas, but it did not help to articulate a well-reasoned exposition of the value of civil liberties. Greenstein notes that in 1953, in part in order to appease McCarthy, Eisenhower permitted the Voice of America to be assaulted, allowed the State Department's security officer to remain although he was believed to be leaking personnel files to McCarthy, instituted a program to dismiss not merely loyalty risks but "security" risks, looked the other way while Administration officials were burning books by "Communists, fellow travelers *et cetera*" in overseas government libraries, and all this without diminishing one whit McCarthy's capacity to grab headlines. Most important,

> for the many loyal and secure members of the federal establishment, who looked to the president as a defender against McCarthy investigations, the absence of a spokesman—indeed the presence in office of a president who himself was using ambiguous criteria to eliminate "undesirable" federal employees—was scarcely reassuring.

Clearly, Greenstein's book is a good deal more than an apologia for Eisenhower, and in one important respect he actually undermines one of the most frequently heard assertions on Ike's behalf. Numbers of his champions have portrayed the general as a man who, by defeating the conservative Senator Taft, made it possible to carry out a program of reform in the style of the New Deal. On the contrary, Greenstein declares, Eisenhower was actually more conservative than Taft. When the Senator died, Eisenhower noted in his diary, "In some things, I found him extraordinarily 'leftish.' " For political purposes, Eisenhower did move somewhat toward the center but only after saying, "I do not know of anything I *hate* as much."

THERE ARE TIMES, though, when one wishes Professor Greenstein was not so bedazzled by Eisenhower. No doubt Ike's gift for expression was undervalued, but it seems a bit much to talk of his "rhetorical versatility" and his "unusual range of verbal capacities." He was a skillful leader, but is it true that the "personnel-assessment skills" of the man who brought to Washington a plethora of Ezra Taft Bensons were "unusually well developed"? Was he "a man with extraordinary capacities for detached, orderly examination of problems and personalities"? One rubs one's eyes after reading that for George Humphrey, being a member

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of the Eisenhower team was "profoundly liberalizing." Nor does it seem probable that Eisenhower was "far more concerned" than Franklin Roosevelt with seeing to it that policymaking be based on "multiple advocacy," for Eisenhower drew on a much narrower spectrum of advisers than F.D.R.

FURTHERMORE, if Eisenhower was so adroit politically, how does one account for the fact that so little came of it? The harvest of legislation is unimpressive, and Eisenhower did little to improve the status of his party. After his landslide victory in 1952, many predicted that under his aegis the G.O.P. would become the country's new majority party. But in 1954 the Democrats took back control of Congress and they held it for all six of his remaining years in the White House. In 1956 Eisenhower became the first President since Zachary Taylor to win election while his party was losing both houses of Congress. Ike's final function as President was to participate in the inauguration of a Democrat as his successor.

Though Greenstein's revelation of Eisenhower's hidden-hand leadership serves to raise Ike's reputation as an executive, it may, by the same token, cause him to fall in esteem as President for he could carry out such a masquerade only by practicing deception. In vivid detail Greenstein shows Eisenhower deliberately misleading the press, and in consequence the American people, by denying that he knew anything about matters he had just discussed with Dulles or some other official and taking pride in his ability to flummox his interrogators. So long, honest Ike. Greenstein states that the kinds of questions raised by Augustine and Kant, and more recently by Sissela Bok, about the morality of lying "would strike Eisenhower as visionary" because he "took it as an unspoken axiom that public language was to be adapted to the circumstances at hand and toward the best possible consequences." Others, however, may well ask whether this is an appropriate model of conduct to bequeath to those who follow after him in the White House.

Lastly, one wishes that Greenstein, in a book that has so much of value, was less willing to excuse or overlook numbingly banal statements by Eisenhower. Over and over Greenstein reports remarks that appear to have been composed by a caricaturist intent on depicting Ike as a proselytizer of 1950s groupthink. Eisenhower is given to generalizations like "In organizing teams, personality is equally important with ability," and "Without confidence, enthusiasm and optimism in command, victory is scarcely obtainable." He advises politicians, "When the people are waving at you wave your arms and move your lips, so you look like you're talking to them. It doesn't matter what you say." His most profound principles of leadership are to smile, give a pat on the back, and show an interest in the other fellow. Long before Eisenhower makes specific mention of the need to win friends and influence people, we are reminded of Dale Carnegie.

By his painstaking analysis, Greenstein should convince even the most unrelenting critic of Eisenhower's that the man had greater skills as Chief Executive than have been recognized, but that is only a part, and not the most important part, of the story. By concentrating on this single question of leadership style, and by revealing, perhaps inadvertently, so much about the quality of Eisenhower's thought, he leaves unchallenged the conviction that in fundamental ways Ike's critics may have known what they were talking about—that in the age of Eisenhower the President of the United States had too little hidden in his hand.

WILLIAM E. LEUCHTENBURG

William E. Leuchtenburg, William Rand Kenan Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is the author of *In the Shadow of FDR: From Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan*, to be published by Cornell University Press in October.

THE AURA OF SUICIDE

The Stories of Breece D'J Pancake

(Atlantic-Little Brown, 178 pp., $13.50)

Suicides are special cases: they demonstrate, beyond recall, the grimmest of convictions about life; we walk on tiptoe around them. Writers who kill themselves, it seems to me, are doubly silencing. The act casts so long a shadow across the work that to try and speak in terms of *talent* rather than of *pain* is to indicate one's own lack of feeling. And perhaps, however indirectly, this is part of the intention. It is certainly evident that literary suicides succeed in doing themselves out of a genuinely critical appreciation; what they get instead is the most uneasy kind of praise. I am thinking especially of younger writers, about whom there is no way to discuss the usual, workaday considerations—signs of promise or limitations, guesses as to how the writer might develop and thoughts on the direction he or she would best not take. There is only the critic, properly elegiac or improperly picking at bones.

The reviews of *The Stories of Breece D'J Pancake* have been uniformly reverent: look, we have been told, what a gift shone briefly in our midst. Robert Towers wrote an attentive, generously inclined piece in *The New York Review of Books* and Joyce Carol Oates went even further in a front-page rave in *The New York Times Book Review*. She found Pancake to be "a young writer of such extraordinary gifts that one is tempted to compare his debut to Hemingway's. . . ." Pancake's reputation, it should be noted, preceeded him; I (and I assume others) had heard mention of his name—it wasn't, obviously, one I was likely to forget—from several magazine and book editors some time before I ever set eyes on this collection: I was prepared to pay attention. Well, I have read the stories and I, at least, found that they don't quite hold up to the acclaim surrounding them.

Breece D'J Pancake was not yet 27 when he killed himself a few years ago. He had attended the creative-writing program at the University of Virginia on a fellowship and published a few short stories while there, mostly in *The Atlantic*. Pancake came from the foothills of West Virginia and, in spite of the friends he made and recognition he re-

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ceived, appears to have carried an implacable sense of apartness. This I gathered from the accounts by two former teachers, James Alan McPherson and John Casey, which are contained in the foreword and afterword to the book.

The inclusion of *two* memoirs in so slim a volume is in itself a bit curious, as though the distanced tone of the writing needed to be warmed up by some friendly recollection. Both men apparently helped Pancake a great deal but their affection for him has a reserved note to it. He seems to have needed more than either McPherson or Casey could give, or not to have known how to ask for what they could have provided: solace, understanding, company—"an instant of basic human understanding," as McPherson describes it. The reader learns that Pancake wrote as he drank—hard—and that he both resented and felt attached to the worn terrain that bred him.

These stories, like Pancake himself, don't invite lavish involvement. They are spare, undoubtedly, but they are also pitiless: try and get too close to them and they will rebuff you. Set in the impoverished valleys and towns of West Virginia, the stories are mounted in hard, bleak details. Everything—money, jobs, sex—is in short supply, and nothing yields to the human element, least of all other people. The characteristic point of view is that of a muffledly sensitive male in his twenties who works at a grimy occupation—coalminer, truckdriver, or gas station attendant—and plays at even grimier activities—cockfighting, boxing, fox-hunting. These young men, and this is even truer of the women they turn to for love but end up "rutting," have had feelings once; now all they have is the absence of response. The prevailing tone is as impassive as the landscape: "This is how it is," Pancake seems to be saying, "ain't nothin' goin' to change nohow."

The aspect of Pancake's work most singled out for praise has been his handling of detail. And his eye is indeed very clear, although I have doubts about how much it takes in. In the best stories—"Trilobites," "Hollow," "Fox Hunters," "In the Dry"—the details are sharp as stones and are used to puncture any airy sentiments the narrator might have once had. Colly, the dirt-farmer in the first and most accomplished story, "Trilobites," has been the sort of whimsical fellow who could write in his girlfriend, Ginny's, yearbook: " 'We will live on mangoes and love.' " Now, however, he feels "like a real fool" for what he wrote and the futility of such dreams is driven home to the reader by the inertness of the physical surroundings and the fearful decision of Colly's widowed mother to sell the family farm.

The deadlocked quality of the Teays River area that has come to overwhelm Colly as it has overwhelmed all its inhabitants is conveyed in quick, ugly strokes: "The pool smells like rot, and the sun is a hardish brown"; "The air is hot, but it sort of churns, and the set screens in the kitchen window rattle." When mother and son talk, they do so with a drawling indifference that seems utterly unfamilial—like one stranger at a bus depot to another: " 'I ain't going to live in Akron,' I say. 'An' just where you gonna live, Mister?' 'I don't know.' " After Colly has a flat sexual reunion with Ginny, who's returned for a visit, the story ends with an unexpectedly expansive image which momentarily, at least, allows the reader in and gives the narrator a chance out:

> I get up. I'll spend tonight at home. I've got eyes to shut in Michigan—maybe even Germany or China, I don't know yet. I walk, but I'm not scared. I feel my fear moving away in rings through time for a million years.

THIS SORT of reprieve, however tenuous, is unusual. More frequently, Pancake's stories begin and end in an atmosphere of quiet fury—more eruptive than depression, and therefore disquieting. The violence is diverted—a woman gets cuffed, a doe is shot and gutted—but it still threatens precisely because it isn't exhausted. This is particularly apparent in one of the more rounded-out stories, "In the Dry," featuring a young scab trucker named Ottie who returns to the droughty valley where he has been raised by a foster family. No one seems pleased to see him after the passage of years: "Law, it's you," his foster mother greets him. Bus, a cousin who has been crippled in a car accident that Ottie was involved in, recognizes him but refuses to do more than blink in acknowledgement. After a furious outburst from his foster father, Old Gerlock, Ottie leaves, stopping first to take care of Old Gerlock's daughter's mute sexual need, expressed by her "gray, waiting" presence. The story is powerful; it suggests a silent screaming, like the "awful noise" the gears of Ottie's truck make as he pulls out into the night.

But too often the underlying anger and depression of Pancake's voice is tiring, even boring. I found myself getting weary of knowing what his characters don't feel; I longed to know what they *do* feel. His relentlessly laconic style begins to seem imposed; even West Virginia must boast a few chatty types as well as these people who drop a few words in between their pauses. The stories revolving around characters other than stand-ins for Pancake's own don't ring true to me. "A Room Forever" is about a boathand on shore leave who picks up a pubescent prostitute and makes a stab at reaching out to her, which she scornfully rejects. Immediately after this the girl goes out and slits her wrists, which causes the unflappable narrator to muse "how shit always sinks." The schematic misery of this story made me think of those black-hued contributions that appear in high school literary magazines; the insistent pointlessness of its tone ends up evoking no greater interest in the reader than a desire for the story to end.

The depressive in literature has acquired, these past decades, an unimpeachable stature; we respond to it with automatic seriousness. This fact, I imagine, has something to do with the attention conferred upon these stories, whose author looks downward on the book jacket, retreating into the shadow of the lens. I wonder also if Pancake's reviewers, tired of reading fiction about jaded urban couples, weren't drawn in by the unfamiliar form that bleakness takes in the hills of West Virginia. There is an exotic spirit to his stories, almost in spite of themselves, filled as they are with scrappy facts—eating turtle meat, working the face of a coal mine. Still the harsh mystique of this rural Southern life leaves an irrevocably bitter impression. I doubt that many readers will be moved to go back to any of these stories a second time. *The Stories of Breece D'J Pancake* is a distinctly minor collection with glints of a larger gift. To elevate these modest offerings by hailing them as more than they are is to honor neither the reality of the writer's talent nor of his pain.

DAPHNE MERKIN

Daphne Merkin is a New York writer.

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BRIEF REVIEW

Aké: The Years of Childhood by Wole Soyinka

(Random House, 230 pp., $14.95)

In *Aké: The Years of Childhood*, Wole Soyinka has departed from his more familiar territory of social strife to journey back home, back to the joyful world of childhood. In this autobiography, which spans the first eleven years of Soyinka's life, from 1934 to 1944, the renowned Nigerian author assumes a child's perspective and a lyrical style.

Soyinka portrays his home, Aké, as always a reassuring friend: there is his favorite rock where he goes for solitude, a guava tree capable of "swallowing time," and a marketplace, where everyday the *akara* seller could be found with beancakes ". . . perfuming the air with groundnut oil."

The marketplace, and indeed all of Aké, is an exciting as well as a baffling world. What is commonplace to the adult is a challenge to the young Soyinka's inquisitive mind. As the adults say of him, "Be careful. He will kill you with his questions." When answers from the adults are not forthcoming or satisfying, Soyinka invents his own curious, and often amusing, explanations.

Like all children, he invents explanations that will bring his world into harmony. He does not perceive a conflict between the Yoruba pantheon and Christian monotheism. There is room in his imagination for Yoruba spirits *òrò*, *iwin*, and *egúngún*, as well as the Christian apostles and Bible. In fact, the boy decides that the St. Peter in the stained glass window of the Church must be an *egúngún* because he wears the *egúngún* robes, even though he lacks the traditional mask. And Soyinka accepts with equanimity both his father's insistence that he win a scholarship at the white man's school and his grandfather's insistence that he undergo the Yoruba ritual of ankle and wrist incisions.

Toward the end of *Aké*, Soyinka, at age eleven, at the threshold of manhood, begins to discover that the world is imperfect and does require change. Like most children, he had feared "CHANGE" in his home. Yet, at the end of *Aké*, Soyinka watches his mother's growing involvement in the Egba Women's Union, a group organized to protest the tax levied on marketwomen. While Soyinka's political action at this tender age is limited to running errands for the women, he learns that individual actions can, and must, be translated into social action.

This political event, so powerfully portrayed, clearly made a lasting impression on the man Soyinka was to become. Today, Soyinka continues to articulate his political concerns, explicitly in his "guerrilla theater," editorials, and lectures, and more subtly, in his plays. Indeed, it is Soyinka's drama that has made him an international literary figure. Such plays as *The Lion and the Jewel*, *The Road*, and *Death and the King's Horseman* depict social and political conflicts which, though set in Nigeria, address universal concerns.

Aké is a beautifully written book about childhood, but even more important, it is a sample of the talent of Wole Soyinka, an extremely gifted writer whose work deserves far more attention and appreciation than it has received in this country.

NANCY MARDER

Nancy Marder studied African literature in Nigeria on a grant from Yale University.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 4*

better in Mr. Kuttner's world?

Picture a dire scenario: "privileged" labor drawn into neocorporatist arrangements, business strengthened by its ties with government, and the not-so-privileged left out in the cold. Historically, the underside of neomercantilism has been the "strong" state.

Mr. Kuttner's suggestions are critically important: free trade and protectionism are not the right categories, we have to know our industries and ponder "managed" trade relations. Let's do it with eyes open, however. Risks abound.

STEPHAN HAGGARD
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the editors:

Bob Kuttner's blistering attack on "free trade" defined the major policy issue facing this generation: how to maintain a rising standard of living in an increasingly integrated and competitive world economy in which foreign governments are partners in promoting trade, not disinterested observers. When forced to act on trade issues, our government selects an ad hoc approach that only puts off the day of reckoning.

Mr. Kuttner also, quite correctly, brings the economic profession in for some well-deserved, and long overdue, criticism. International trade theory abstracts from the "real" world to a degree unmatched by any other area of specialization within the discipline. But Kuttner glosses over the *political* problems of implementing the policies that would follow from a more realistic vision of foreign commercial practices. It's more than getting the Reagan Administration to acknowledge that an industrial policy is needed, although that would help a great deal. What is required is an institutional framework that guarantees that whatever economic assistance is provided is not squandered, but, rather, applied in a targeted manner to create companies that are capable of competing with foreign manufacturers on the basis of quality and efficiency.

Given the fractious nature of our political processes, and the high stakes involved, I'm not optimistic. If the Japanese have a comparative advantage, it's not in applied economics, as Kuttner suggests, but in convincing business and labor that the policies proposed, no matter how painful to some vested interests, will be applied fairly and with the common good in mind.

LAURENCE T. PHILLIPS
Arlington, Virginia

Bob Kuttner replies:

I thought I marshaled a good deal of evidence that free trade isn't what it's cracked up to be. America doesn't really practice it consistently, and other nations that flout Ricardo more straightforwardly and guiltlessly—notably Japan—do rather well for it.

In the April 11 TNR, Michael Kinsley responded to my evidence by reiterating the free trade tautology ("Keep Trade Free"). The efficiencies of trade, he insists, are not a matter of morality but of mathematics. Foreign products produced by cheaper labor by definition simply have to benefit American consumers. That is just wrong. Whether they do depends on how we re-employ

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the people and the capital idled by the competition. Nowhere is it written that we will necessarily respond well to the tonic. Unless you believe that Adam Smith reigns supreme, the market by itself doesn't get us there—least of all when our competitors are playing by different rules.

Contrary to what Mr. Heintz says, only about 20 percent of the difference between U.S. and Japanese auto prices reflect wage differentials. The rest represents better management, cheaper capital, and smarter design. Why not let some U.S. workers build Japanese-engineered cars in the United States? That's exactly how Japan treats Boeing's technological lead in aircraft. Content legislation would not "prop up" GM; on the contrary, it would keep GM under real competitive pressure without making American autoworkers the victims. As for exploitation, of course third world countries should industrialize if they choose. But at wages of 70 cents an hour? Some of us boycott South Africa for its racial policies. Others of us boycott Communist goods. Why not boycott the cheap products of countries that ban free trade unions?

Mr. Haggard and Mr. Phillips, I think, have identified exactly the right caveat. How can we be sure that "politicizing" industrial and trade relations won't just produce more stagnation? We can't. Mr. Haggard's facts about third world textile imports are plain wrong (they've increased enormously)—managed trade can be consistent with increased trade. But he is surely right that risks abound. Any international outcome politically bargained is risky, whether in arms control, laws of the sea, boundary conflicts, or trade.

Swearing fealty to a Ricardian mirage is even riskier, though. As Mr. Phillips suggests, the question of the hour is indeed how to maintain a rising standard of living in an integrated world economy where foreign governments are far shrewder than we are about economic planning. Unfortunately, most American economists and public officials propose to meet that challenge hobbled by dogma.

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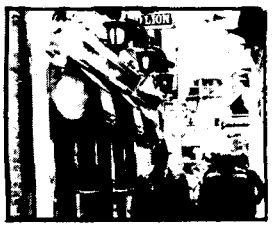

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Memories

I AM LOOKING at a photograph. It was taken fifteen years ago, and, since then, it has usually graced the kitchen wall of the dozen or so places I've lived. There are three people in the photograph. They are, from left to right: the photographer, me, and my wife. We are each on our first trip to Europe. The photographer, who has a fine sense of humor, is shooting into a smoky mirror, which happens to be in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. In the background are tall windows that open onto a balcony that opens onto acres of greenery and water and statues—though in the photograph, which is in black-and-white, all that can be seen coming through the window is a blaze of light. The date is August 1968. My wife (well, we weren't married when the picture was taken, but we would be a year later) is dressed, appropriately, in culottes. She also wears a striped shirt and a Greek fisherman's cap. I have on corduroy pants and a denim shirt and hold a tweed driving cap I bought at a place near the Paris Opéra called Léon Chapelier, which a year later was transformed into a horrible fake English pub. The photographer is dressed in a similarly casual fashion: checked shirt, white jeans, broad black belt. His passport is sticking out of his pocket, along with a few pencils. He is holding his Pentax to his face, so I can see only his left eye and the bouquet of blond curls on his head. The name of the photographer is John Short. At the time he took the picture he was twenty years old and between his junior and senior years in college. It was a happy time and he was a happy man. The Versailles photograph is now a relic.

JOHN GERDES SHORT, my good friend, died on the morning of April 4, 1983, of cancer. Short was the kind of friend you made in college and then would find popping up at exactly the right time for years and years afterward. He was in Paris with me on the day I met my wife; he was in New Orleans with me on the day we took our first child home from the hospital (I have that photograph too); he convinced me to take my first job as a publisher. He was the kind of friend you might not see for long stretches—even three or four years—and when he would suddenly reappear, with a new job or a new address or a new wife, we would simply resume our conversation of three years before, never missing a beat. Like most of us who went to college in the late '60s, Short took a long time to decide what he wanted from life. In school he was a photographer and a writer (he won the Dana Reed Prize, which is the top writing prize at Harvard) and a political activist with a penchant for anarchy—but anarchy as Short defined it, gentle and funny in his black leather jacket and motorcycle boots. When Short graduated from college, he moved to Cape Cod to become editor of *The Provincetown Advocate*, which he turned into a serious weekly newspaper. Too serious, in fact, for some of the local populace, who kept complaining that the paper was running "negative" stories. Short's solution was an eight-column banner headline across the top of page one, saying: "A Rather Peaceful Fall Week Passes; Birds Fly South, Trees Change Color." After a few years at the end of Cape Cod, Short decided (again, in the fashion of many of his peers) to go to law school. One of those three- or four-year gaps followed, and I found him working for a fancy Boston law firm on the 30th floor of one of those new buildings near the harbor—intense, funny, wearing a three-piece suit, his locks shorn, but not too badly. It was also around this time that Short got married, to another lawyer. Neither the job nor the marriage lasted, and Short was off to the Virgin Islands alone to be a different kind of lawyer. Another gap. Then two years ago, he came up to Washington to visit, tan and happy and about to marry again, this time the right woman. Everything, at last, was in place.

LAST SUMMER Short learned he had cancer, a tumor in his chest. He flew back and forth between St. Thomas and Boston for chemotherapy. I watched a World Series game with him in his room at Beth Israel. We were pulling for the Brewers, and they won. A good omen. Three days after Christmas there was a dangerous six-hour operation to remove the tumor. We were told that it was successful. He had a 90 percent chance to recover completely and lead a normal life. He went back to St. Thomas happy and relieved. In matters of the heart, I was rarely direct with Short, but after the operation I told him how brave he was and how much affection all of us had for him. He feigned embarrassment, but I knew he was pleased. He had fought a hard fight, and he had won.

BUT HE GREW WEAKER. He returned to Beth Israel, where the doctors found the cancer had spread to his liver and stomach. A day after he got the news, ten days before he died, he called me. It was a Saturday afternoon and I was in the kitchen, looking at the Versailles photograph as he talked. He spoke in bursts of four or five words at a time. "Glassman, this is it," he said. "I've got a month, maybe two or three." I flew up to Boston and saw him on Palm Sunday. A dirty trick, we agreed. Too much disgusting irony. He died the day after Easter.

FOUR DAYS LATER, a service in Memorial Church in Harvard Yard. The church is full of friends of Short's, people I haven't seen in thirteen or fourteen years. In our grief, we still manage to note each other's progress, assessing paunches, bald spots, spouses, and careers. A Schubert Quartet, a eulogy from Short's friend James Kunen (ending with a wonderful imitation of Short telling Kunen, "Enough!"), a passage from Ecclesiastes, and Psalm 121 ("I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help"). We filed out, thirty-five-year-olds, now older.

MEMENTO MORI. I dig out Short's treatise on the meaning of existence, a large, partly whimsical annotated chart he published in the college paper in 1969. The title is "Your Life etc." The theme is the randomness of it all. At the end, Short wrote, "Death: Death needs little introduction. It rivals birth in its number of different levels of random causes. It can happen to you at any time, and stop the whole thing; there's nothing you can do about it." Too much disgusting irony.

J.K.G.

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